

GWR Fruit Van Diagram Y2

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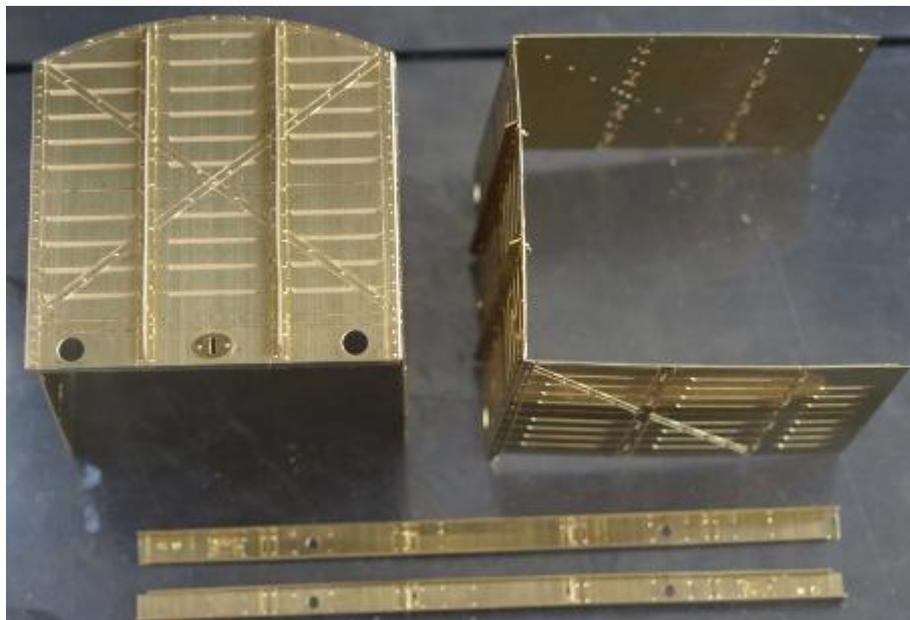
These were very long-lived vehicles, introduced in the 1890's and lasting into BR days so it would be relatively easy to justify them on a great many layouts. In pre-grouping times there were even some dual fitted with the Westinghouse brake so they must have travelled widely. This is to be an early period van with a single brake lever and no rain strips, which must have made loading in the rain fun!

The livery notes suggest they were grey until 1913, when they were painted brown, but I wonder if when first built they were not painted red, grey does not seem to have come into use until around 1904 when the new five plank wagons were introduced and the wagon livery altered.

What's in the box?

As is usual with WEP, the kit arrives as a flat pack containing a large sheet of very fine etches, a bag of white metal castings, for buffers, vacuum & steam pipes, couplings, etc., most of which got scrapped (I do not like white metal for buffer heads or couplings and think vacuum and steam pipes made of it are prone to damage). However, the axle boxes, vacuum cylinder and oil lamp are very good castings. Some wire and seven A4 sheets of history, instructions, exploded diagrams and a good 7mm drawing. My client wanted one suitable for the early 1900's, which meant using the old style brake lever and not the

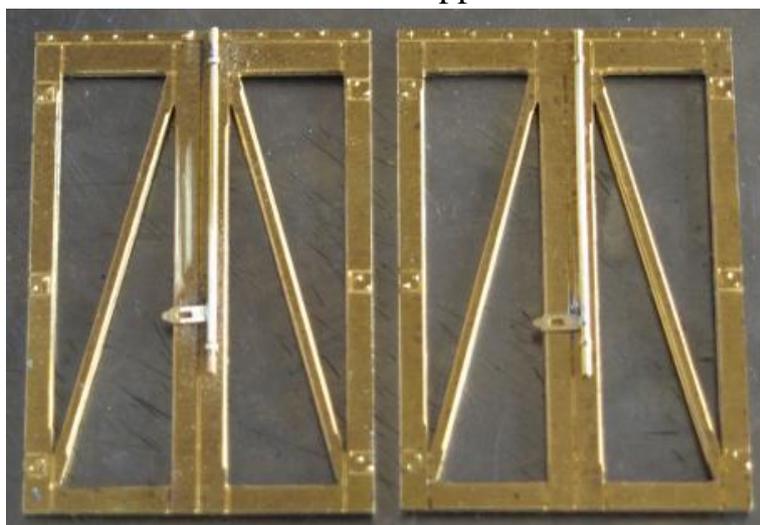
Churchward type. It is important to establish which since they require different parts. The Churchward brakes also clutter up the underframe too, which is pretty crowded anyway on this small vehicle. The kit will be embellished with Hayward buffers, lost wax vacuum, steam pipes, and CPL couplings.



The body.

The body is in two parts that are folded as shewn here and soldered together across their centres to make a box. After punching out numerous bolt heads I fitted the stanchions and fixed them by twisting the tabs to hold them

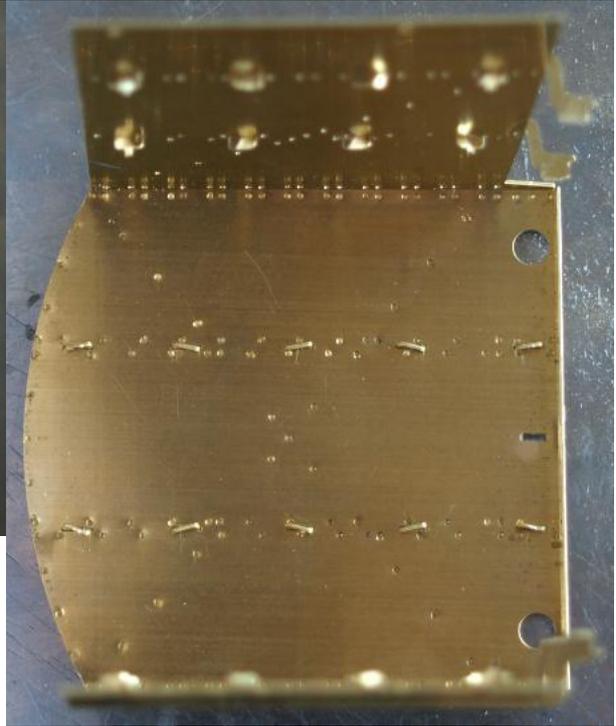
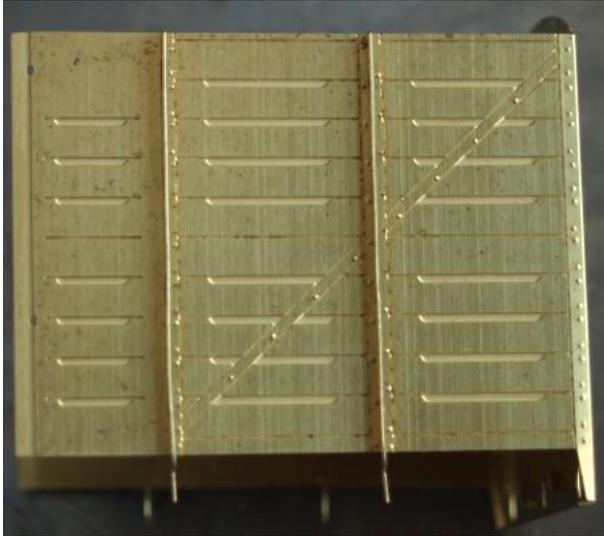
in place. No chance then of solder running into the plank joints. The solebars are a simple fold-up, as is the fold under at each end. Before bending up, it is a good idea, as the instructions suggest, going over all the slots and open them up by forcing the corner of a piece of scrap etch to aid the insertion of the tabs for the stanchions. Be sure to support the sides well around each slot while doing



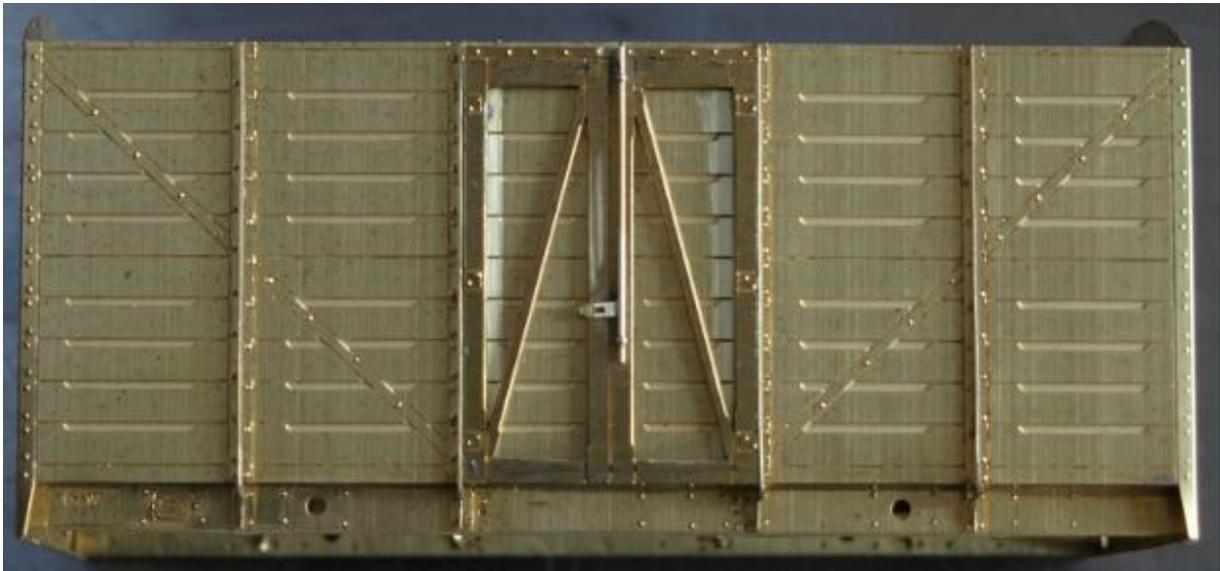
this.

The doors are laminated from three thicknesses of etch and it is important to orient them correctly so that the holes for the locking bar fixings are open throughout. I used some wire in them to hold the parts square while soldering them up from the rear. The lock bars were fitted before fitting the

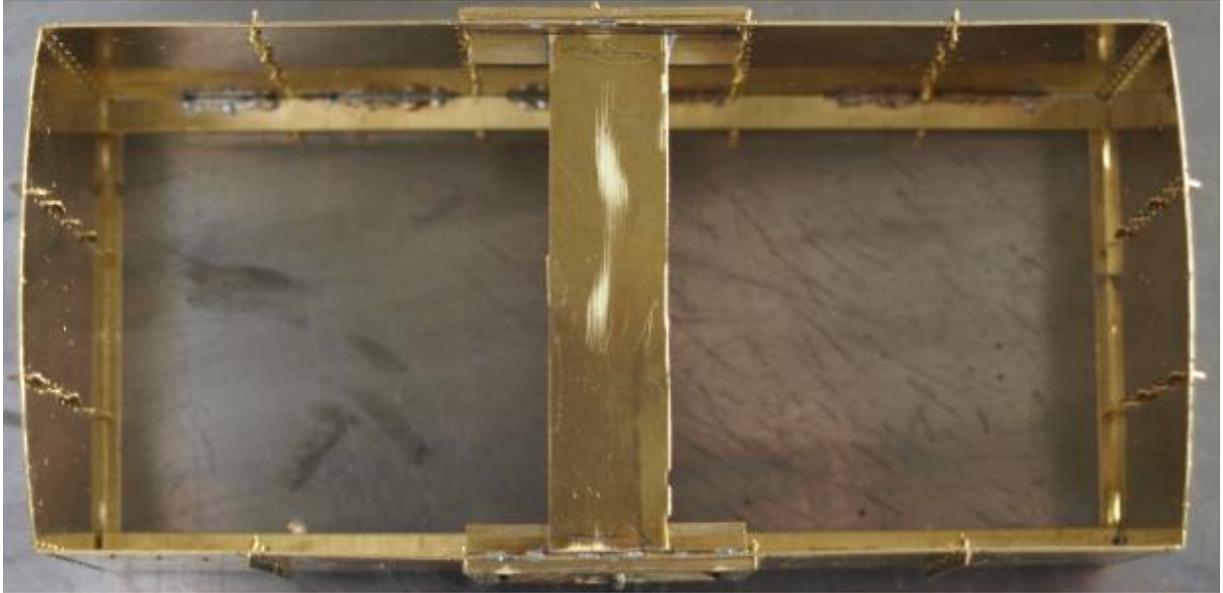
doors to the body but any protrusions on the back of each door needs then to be filed flat. There is provision for the bar fixings to go through the body sides however.



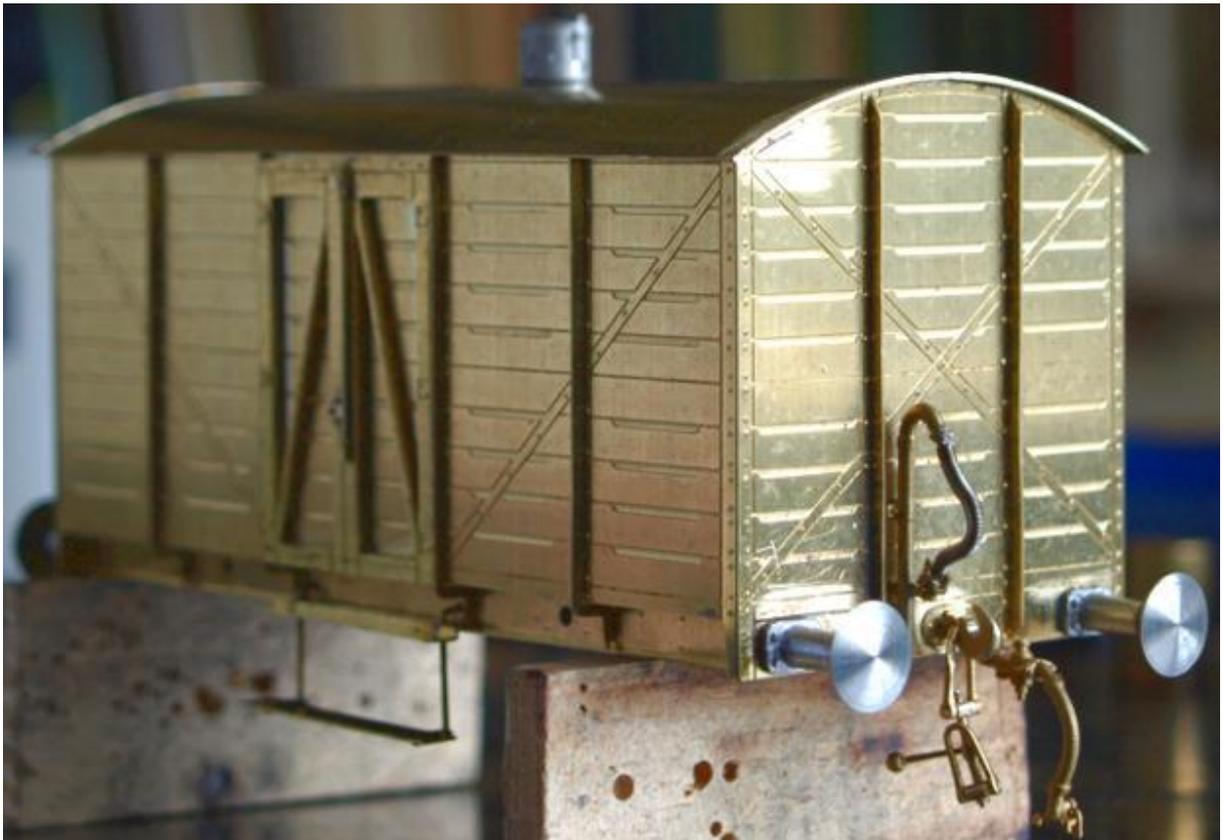
The remaining stanchions have been fitted and here one can see how the tabs are twisted, alternately. It is advisable before fitting these to make sure that the bottom tab on each stanchion will fit easily into the slot in the solebar. Once these were completed, I fitted the solebar and soldered it up from the inside, then soldered the doors in place with the bottom level with the base of the van side.



Here is the body shell assembled, all square and ready for the roof. The doors are a tight fit between the stanchions and will need trimming with a flat file; they should be a good fit without having to force them in.



On the inside I soldered in a couple of small pieces of angle across the tops of the doors to add a little more rigidity and then some scrap was measured to fit across the van body to stop any propensity for the sides bowing. It also helps make a good, straight, joint with the roof.



The roof went through the rolling bars several times until it was a near perfect fit to the arch. The end strips were then fitted and hole opened out for the lamp prior to fitting. Fitting is not difficult, there are etched witness marks inside on the ends and the roof so lining it up square is very simple. The buffers were replaced with a set from Haywood, the vacuum pipe is Slater's and the steam

pipe and couplings are CPL. The steps are exactly as the instructions suggest and make strong units. Now for the underframe and those complex brakes.

The Springs.



A jig was made up on the steel plate exactly to match the holes in the springs. It is worth checking the holes. Nominally, they are etched for 0.5mm wire but the etching process cannot be that consistent so often they are a little under or over size. They

were large enough to take 0.6mm wire, which ensured that the jig would not wobble.

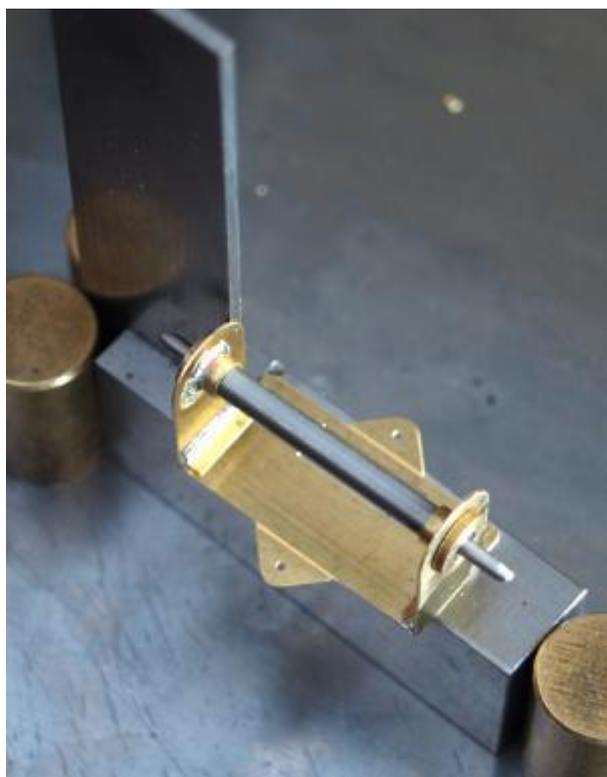
There is an error in the instructions. They state that the laminations with the J hangers should be outside the other two parts. In fact, they should be between



the two parts without J hangers. No doubt, Bill will be correcting the diagram or adding a note in the



instructions. The part with the etched spring detail was put in the jig, face down, a few dabs of solder cream added and then the two with the J hangers

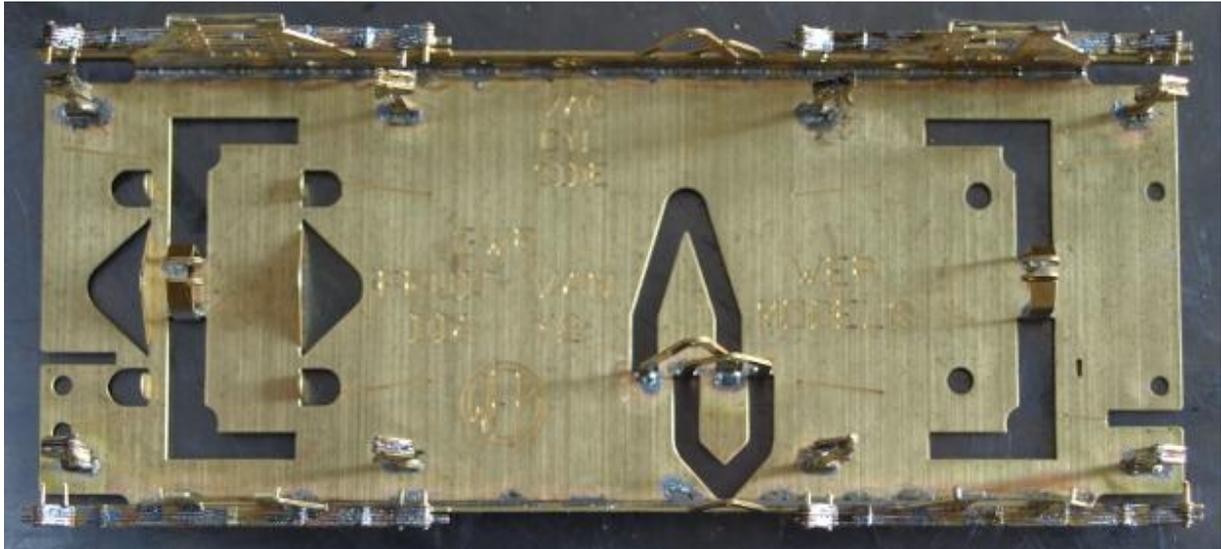


were added with more solder between each laminate and finally the last piece before soldering from the centre outwards. The spring, when removed, has the joining tabs removed and the fronts of the 'bolts' filed down ready for fitting to the underframe. I would suggest a similar method if using a soldering iron with the jig made up in a small piece of MDF. Ensure the pins ('bolts') are secured to the laminates before removing the spring from the jig.

Bill's modern kits use a single thickness of etch for the bearings, which I do not like but he supplies me with suitable bearings. To ensure that

the unit is strong and non-flexible, I added some angle strip at the bend. In addition, I solder the unit up on an engineer's square set up on the steel plate with magnets and using the axle to hold the bearings parallel. The result is a wheel set that runs true and is unlikely to distort in service. The bearings also required to be thinned down substantially before the wheels were fitted. However, there then was no need of packing washers to prevent the vehicle 'hunting'

The Underframe



The underframe is a simple set of bends for the sides and various supports. I folded up all the various parts and ran a fillet of solder in the bend lines to add strength. The brake hangers and blocks are each of four laminates and I found it simpler to keep as much as possible on the fret and clamped to the steel plate. This enabled me to solder the parts properly lined up using a wooden cocktail stick in the centre holes to ensure accuracy. There are lots of spares for the



brake hangers but none for the brake blocks, so do not lose any! (Most unusual as Bill normally provides lots of spares for easily lost parts.

Here the springs are fixed in place and soldered from the back to ensure they were flat against the underframe and no burn marks appears on the springs. It

really is a most elegant method of producing springs that are both strong and accurate. It also gets rid of more of the dreaded white metal!

The underframe is complex and there is not a great deal of space so some care is needed. There is provision for all the brake gear to be fitted including parts for the later Churchward corner handbrake fittings.

I decided to leave out the bits that cannot be seen behind the wheels to simplify it and leave a little extra room to fit the couplings, which is going to be a



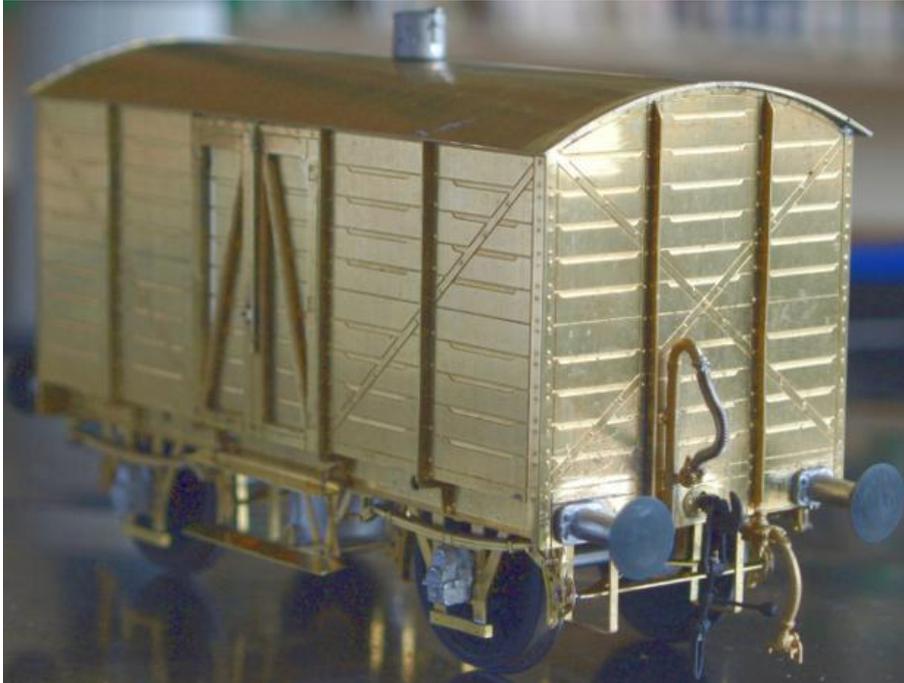
struggle anyway.

The corner brake handles can be fitted to the underframe before fitting to the body but the older handbrake lever cannot be fitted until the underframe has been fixed to the body. Not easy as the steps get in the way so I would suggest not fitting the steps on that side until the brake lever and rack have been dealt with.

There are not enough parts to cater for the full quota of safety hangers (as noted in the instructions) but it is easy enough to make up extras and there is more than enough suitable scrap etch from the sheet to do that. I used one of the supplied hangers as a master to mark in the bends lines.

Due to familiarity with this range of kits I rarely have to refer much to the numbered parts sheet showing where each part is on the etch. However, this time there were a few parts that needed looking up, unfortunately the numbers of the parts on the exploded diagram often do not match those on the etch sheet diagram. A minor annoyance.

I found the floor is a fraction long to fit easily inside the body but it was easy enough to file a little off each end.



Here are two more pictures of the completed vehicle ready to for painting. Another nice little kit for the more experienced builder of a useful and long-lived prototype.

Bill Parker's Response

Hi Raymond,
Once again an excellent report on the build up of this kit.

Early colours red or grey? The odds are open there but I do not think that anyone could really say that you were wrong one way or the other.

I take on board your comments on incorrectly numbered parts and will look into this and correct any mistakes likewise with the springs.
Regards

Bill Parker: WEP Models

