

William Mason's Centennial Locomotive

This was William Mason's entry into the Exhibition of science and Industry in 1876, celebrating 100 years of independence. Baldwin supplied two locos for that event, and Porter supplied one. All were narrow gauge locos, designed to run on the sharp curves of the exhibition grounds and haul trains full of visitors between the different pavilions. The Bachmann 'Centennial' 4-4-0 is so named because that was Baldwin's demo engine along with a 2-6-0.

It was noted during the course of the exhibition that while the little Mason Bogie performed extremely well, the lead drivers still suffered excessive flange wear despite the brand new patent design Mason had used on the chassis bearing. This ultimately led to the adoption of a pilot truck as first used on the 2-6-6T of the Denver South Park & Pacific RR.

After the exhibition the 0-4-4T was dispatched to its new owner, The New York & Manhattan Beach RR. That road bought two more to the same basic design a year later. The only difference essentially was the addition of larger drive wheels.

See the reference at [Tom Farin's Mason Bogie site](#) for the photo of the Centennial loco and her sisters on the New York & Manhattan Beach RR

Similar locos were also bought by the Boston Revere Beach & Lynn RR.

Most of the surviving records from the Mason works are now at 'The Old Colony' I believe and they tend to be protective of the collection. In good hands I guess.



I had so many Mason Bogie bits lying around from the class, I felt I should use some of the left overs, also since we're running the original Mason Bogie pilots and cabs by Vance Bass, as part of the Bronson Tate kit lineup, I had another cab and pilot sample to try out!





The engine was built using the original drawings by William Mason for this loco. The drawings predate the final loco, and as such there are some small changes that need to be made to adapt it to the finished version, but the drawings are excellent and provide a great basis to model from. The 0-4-0 block is a stock Aristocraft Slope Back tendered 0-4-0, with much of my Mason class laser cut valve gear parts added, along with new cross heads. The bell rig is brass casting developed for the class by Jim Barron. All the rest is styrene and PVC pipes, all built basically to the same method as outlined in my Masterclass. Finally, while the Centennial Mason had 36" drivers, and the Aristo block is perfect for that application, the rest of this 0-4-4T design typically used 42" drivers. If it's of interest to you, the stock Hartland 4-4-0 block that can be purchased on its own from Hartland has a wheel size and spacing perfect for the larger wheeled versions. Both versions are possible.

During the 1870s Mason developed a decorative style incorporating the geometric designs of Charles Eastlake. Eastlake was a contemporary British Architect with a passion for Furniture design. His wooden furniture featured neat and simple stylised plant and leaf detail which became very popular in the US, both in furniture style and architectural detailing during the 1870s. Mason adopted some of that decorative style on his locomotives. The famous decorative engines of the South Park are based on Mason's Eastlake designs, as is this Centennial 0-4-4T. Yeah I know some of you will say.."nice but not my style", sure, but you need think about this in the context of the day. So please enjoy it for what it is.



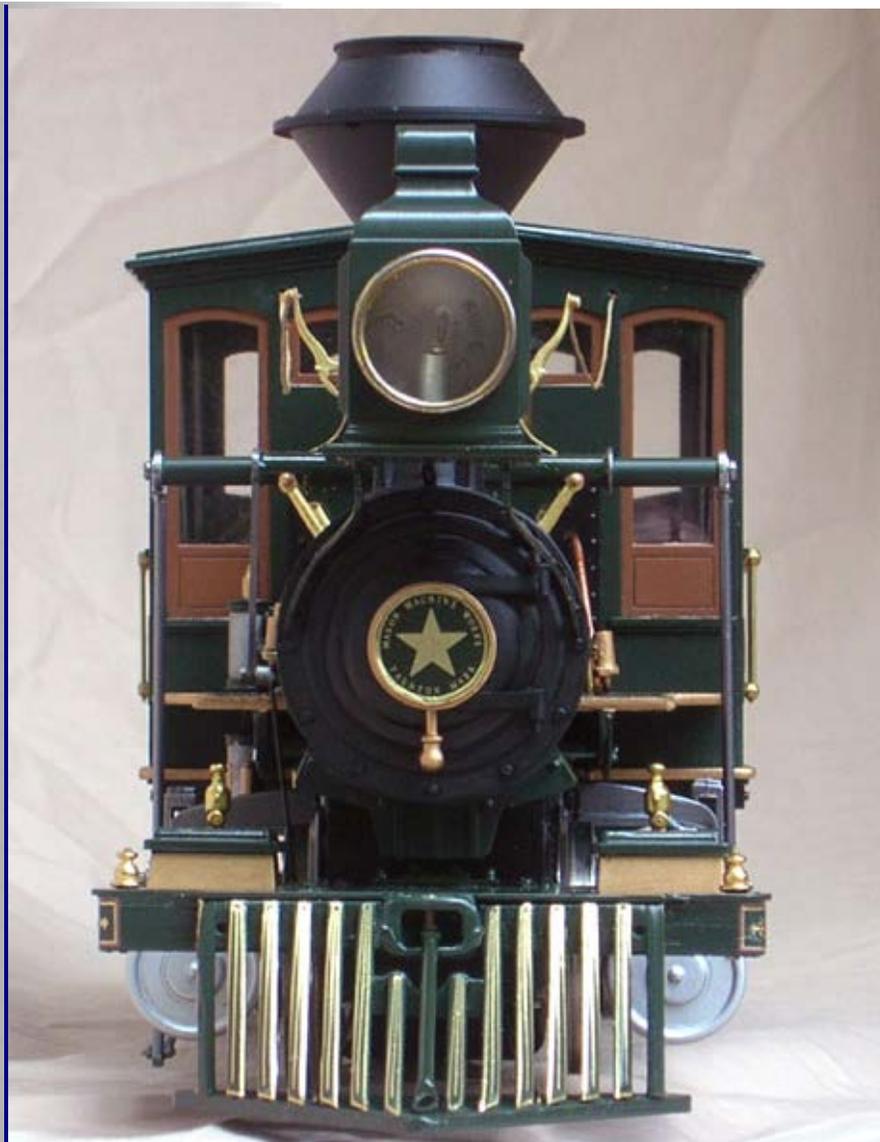




I developed the decoration artwork using AutoCad in full colour and set up 3 sheets at Letter size of all the designs laid out, plus spares for screw ups! I sent the files to Stan Cedarleaf for production into Decals. Thanks heaps for the decals Stan, she just wouldn't work without your efforts here!







The headlight Bracket is another of my Mason Masterclass left overs. All the laser cut stainless steel 2-6-6T chassis kits came with this headlight bracket laser cut in 1mm stainless steel, along with the UP styled version. I have a few sets of these brackets here and never got to use any of them..infact the original #42 2-6-6T I built for the class was entirely scratch made, I never got to try the cab kits, or pilot kits, nor bell rig, nor star stanchion castings, as my pilot model was always way ahead of the pack before any kits or castings were made. This time round I was able to use a lot of those parts developed over the years of the Mason class.

The cab and pilot on this 0-4-4T are laser cut wood.

Most of this 0-4-4T is nothing more than an adaption of that work, the similarities between this engine and the 2-6-6T are considerable. Also she's not as small as appearances suggest. Being almost the same size as the 2-6-6T with the pilot wheel left off and the rear tender much shorter. The AA Denny in the Master class was really an adaptation of this type of 0-4-4T Mason.