

Beware!

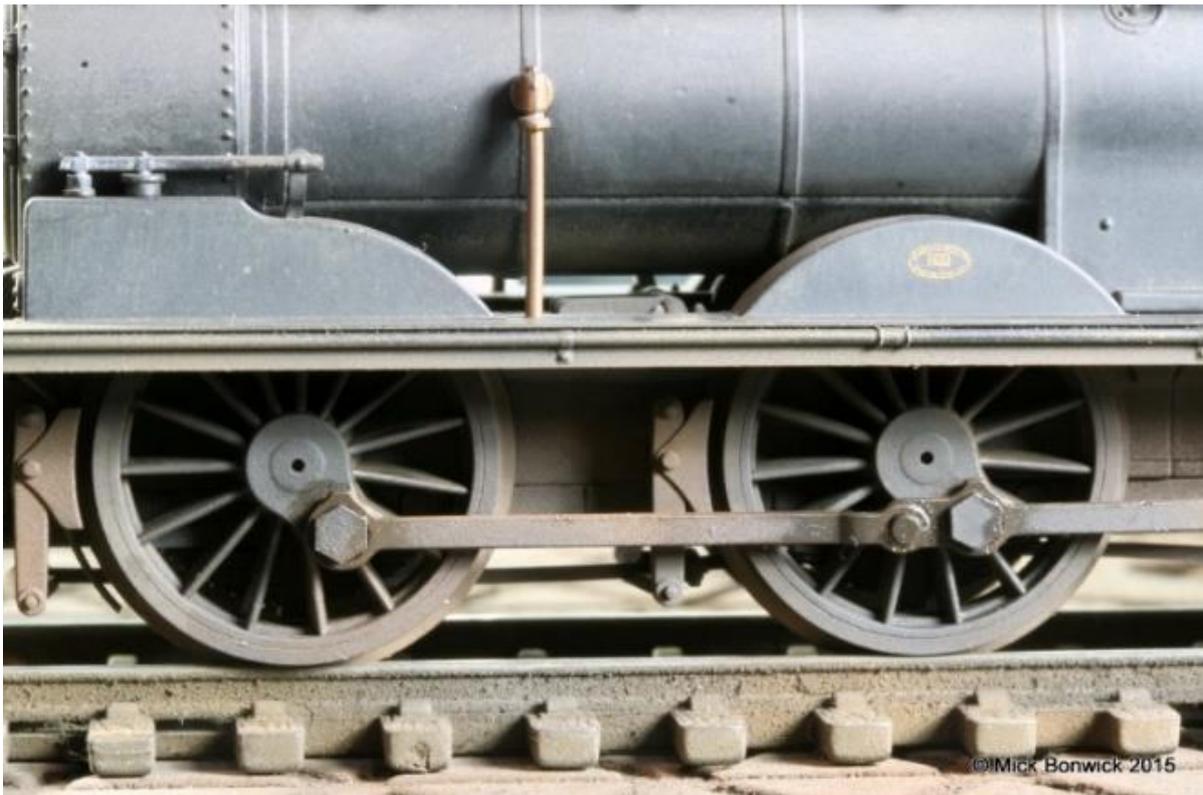
As a weatherer there is something that you need to be aware of that doesn't get mentioned very often, and that is the 'Bachmann tidemark.' Despite the name, the problem can be found in any manufacturer's range.

There is so much grease applied to the chassis geartrain of some modern ready-to-run locomotives at the factory that it flies off all over the interior of the body as soon as you run the motor. The resultant oil (I'm sure it must be thixotropic) will then sit there waiting for you to apply a coat of weathering. Then capillary action will carry that oil all through the weathering coat, creating a stain that goes from any bodywork joins outwards across the outer body surfaces.



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Do not despair. The stain can be removed with judicial application of isopropyl alcohol (IPA) on a cotton swab. Only a small amount at a time, VERY gently applied. This will absorb the oil and evaporate very quickly. If you have become proficient with the airbrush then that can be used as well, applying a thin coat of IPA to the affected area and then rubbing VERY gently with a cotton swab to complete the removal. Note that if you apply too much IPA or rub too hard then you will start to remove the weathering as well.

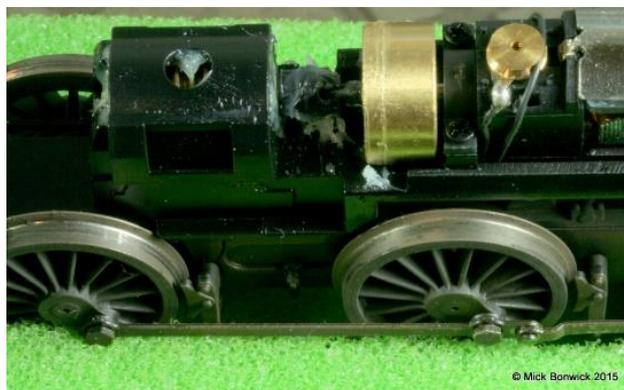


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Prevention consists of a thorough clean of the geartrain before any weathering is attempted. All grease and oil should be removed from the whole chassis and this will prevent the initial spreading over the body interior. When you've got the whole model in pieces it is a good plan to clean the whole of the body interior as well.

I know about all this because the first dozen or so locomotives that I weathered suffered from the same problem, hence the availability of illustrations!



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