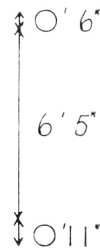


Scale 1 : 76  
4mm-1 foot



## Midland Railway box van

drawing and notes by Smokey Bourne

THERE is no real reply to the groans and comments of "Not yet another drawing of a Midland Railway box van" which will probably greet this article. I will agree that there are a lot more potentially useful subjects that need drawing from this era. Unfortunately obtaining sufficient factual information is not always possible. I am just pleased that I am able to present a drawing of a vehicle, not to my knowledge, previously available.

I first came upon this variation of Midland Van a dozen or so years ago in the condemned road by Coalville shed. I spotted immediately the uncommon arrangement of bracing the outside frame and took a photograph of the vehicle to support a model which I intended to build. Incidentally in the same set of roads, but in an unphotographable state was an

MR three plank dropside wagon in the livery of the London Brick Co. complete with symbolic hod carrier. I wish that my pen had not run out and I had been able to take notes of this private owner. However, back to the van and the main theme. The model was never made and the only result of the Coalville visit for several years was that I had a postcard print of the vehicle on my files. Now that in itself is a laugh. My files today depend on my personal knowledge to find anything, but in those days even I could not even find things. It was, therefore, more by luck than anything else that it came to the attention of the late Bill Steel. Bill took one look and got quite excited. I never did find out what all the fuss was about, but Bill knew more about Midland freight stock than anybody else that I know.

So if he got excited I was on to something quite interesting. Ever optimistic I checked the Coalville sidings the next time that I was in that area, but, of course, the van, and for that matter everything else which I remembered, had gone. The story now jumps another five years and I am back in the Midlands and for nine months my duties caused me to pass back and forth along the Worcester-Pershore road weekly. During this period I did not once stop and examine the grounded Midland van body that I noticed hidden in an orchard. Fortunately I had to return to this job some time after it had finished, but this time in mid winter. With the trees stripped of leaves I could now see from the road that this van was of the same type that I had previously found at Coalville. This fact was

LEFT: *The Coalville van—a more orthodox Midland van is beyond.*

TOP RIGHT: *The bottom track, supports and door carrying gear.*

BOTTOM RIGHT: *A detail of the door catch.*

