



PRACTICAL LETTERS

Notes on Parting Tools

DEAR SIR.—First, may I offer my congratulation to Mr. Latta for his notes on this subject. He tells us just what we want to know and there must be but few model engineers who will not be helped by the information he gives.

To those who are still finding difficulty with very deep cuts in "luggy" material, on lathes nothing like strong enough for the job, I would like to mention a trick which enabled me to part off a mild-steel bar of $2\frac{3}{8}$ in. diameter when defeat seemed inevitable.

The cutting edge of the tool was ground to the shape of an arrow head, the two equal parts being at about 150 deg. to each other. As the tool was fed in, the saddle was moved about $1/25$ in., first to one side and then to the other, so that the width of the cut was reduced to half, and there was no rubbing at the sides till the diameter was reduced to less than half an inch. A hacksaw completed the job.

Yours faithfully,
 A. RICKARD TAYLOR.

Lymington.

The "Busy Bee" Engine

DEAR SIR,—In designing the "Busy Bee," Mr. Westbury has surely created a masterpiece, and I write not to criticise, but to offer a suggestion which would, in my opinion, extend its application very considerably.

The present crankcase is as perfect as could be for driving a pedal-cycle through a roller on its rear tyre, but could the designer be persuaded to produce an alternative crankcase to give a power take-off on both sides, one, of course, for the Bantamag?

This would very materially simplify the application of the motor to a mower or, mounted inboard, to a canoe or other light water-craft.

I did, in fact, enquire of the manufacturers of the castings, Messrs. Braid Bros. whether there is such alternative available, and during the conversation which ensued they indicated their willingness to co-operate in production and thought the two variations could be optional.

Yours faithfully,
 C. G. HOWARD.

Epsom.

DEAR SIR,—I am very gratified by the high opinion of the "Busy Bee" engine, expressed by Mr. C. Howard, which I may say, appears to be shared by most people who have built and used it, and I am also interested in his suggestions for producing it in a modified form. The idea of an alternative design, with a shaft extension on both sides of the crankcase, had already occurred to me, and I agree that it would have a greater range of utility for purposes other than cycle propulsion, but owing to pressure of work on other projects, I have not been able to carry out any practical work on such a design. One of the points to be considered is the method of mounting

such an engine, as it is desirable that this should be as adaptable as possible, and I have not definitely decided between the alternatives of casting bearers on the crankcase, or arranging for the attachment of mounting plates or brackets. However, if there appears to be a general interest in extending the scope of the engine in this way, I shall be pleased to get down to it as soon as circumstances permit.

I would like to take this opportunity of thanking all readers who have written to me about the "Busy Bee," as their opinions and experiences have been invaluable. There have been a few complaints and criticisms, but I think these have been dealt with fairly satisfactorily. Thanks are also due to Messrs. Braid Bros. for the services rendered to constructors, in respect of which no complaints have been encountered, and for their co-operation with

Yours faithfully,
 EDGAR T. WESTBURY.

Flash Steam Boilers

DEAR SIR,—I am interested in Mr. Ward's problem to find a material for a radiant core within a flash steam coil.

Pipeclay, fireclay and steatite suggest themselves; materials such as would be used for a muffle furnace, for that is in effect, what the flame chamber becomes.

I recall that quite a variety of star-shaped ceramic forms are made as a stock line for electrical heaters and cookers, and it may be that Mr. Ward would find something ready-made suitable in the stock lists of firms such as:

Steatite Insulations Ltd., 25, Somerset Road, Edgbaston, Birmingham.

Steatite & Porcelain Products Ltd., Stourport-on-Severn, Worcestershire.

Geo. Bray & Co. Ltd., Leicester Place, Leeds 2, Yorks.

Yours faithfully,
 W. D. ARNOT.

Bristol.

The Foster "Princess Marina"

DEAR SIR,—With reference to the note about "Traction Engines at Hull Docks" in Smoke Rings in THE MODEL ENGINEER of September 25th you ask for confirmation of a report about the Foster engine *Princess Marina*.

Although I cannot confirm the data, I can tell you the whereabouts of this engine as recently as September 26th. It is in a yard belonging to Drakeleys at Stetchford, Birmingham, with three other showman's engines, another Foster, a Burrell and, I think the third is a Wallis and Steevens. *Princess Marina* can be seen from the Ring Road, but judging by the grass growing amongst the works, she has not worked for a while. Her registration number is VL 6104, and she was last taxed in 1949.

I hope this information will be of interest.

Yours faithfully,
 K. C. GLEDHILL.

Heswall, Ches.

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