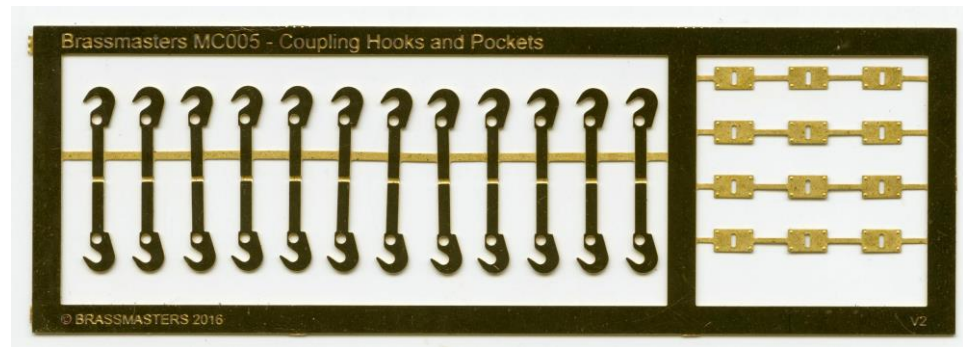
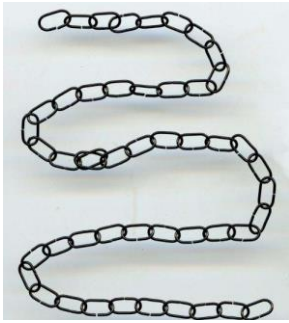


3-link couplings



For many years there has been a gap in the market for a prototypically shaped coupling hook and usable (as opposed to dead scale) sized 3-link couplings. Wagon coupling hooks came in many different sizes and shapes, this one is based on prototype drawings and gives a relatively large 'mouth' opening allowing ease of coupling. The pre-blackened 3-link couplings are soft iron wire and can easily be opened and re-formed into 3 links on the hooks. These are slightly longer and thinner than scale (prototypes again varied) for ease of use and to allow tight curves. Hooks can be painted or chemically blackened once made up.

The couplings can either be used single thickness (12 doubled-up pairs are supplied) or for a more correct appearance, folded and soldered back to back and then dressed to shape with a file –the hook was a forging and tapered to a point at its end. The coupling pockets are sized to take a single width coupling so if doubled ones are required smear the shaft with a little oil before soldering to act as a barrier, solder up and then make a cut (or file) behind the hook and it will be possible to remove the second layer of the shaft thereby allowing it to slide through the pocket. Many wagon kits already include the pocket in their mouldings so for these fit a doubled up shaft. Bend the shaft behind the solebar before securing with glue.

For ease of use we recommend making your own coupling pole from an old paintbrush with a prototypically shaped 'pigs tail' at the end made from 0.4mm brass (not steel) wire; this can then be placed with the link in the receiving coupling mouth and rotated through 90 degrees to couple up. We have observed that 'left-handed' users find a 'pigs tail' bent the opposite way around works best for them, so experiment! See the article by William Barter in MRJ issue 21 for more details.



