



Estate Management – 2.0 Inventory Listing

Anyone who has had to dispose of a large model railway layout, or collection of model equipment, books, magazines, tools, etc, will tell you that a major part of the job is to find out what there is and what it is worth. This usually involves creating an inventory listing, so you can help yourself or your executors by doing so in advance. It is also easier to make a list when your collection is small, and add to it as items are acquired, when information about them is fresh.

This article has been formatted to help the modeller create a living inventory. Subsequent articles will cover how to assess the value and how to dispose of the collection but the important thing is write down what you know now.

Creating a complete and accurate listing is a considerable responsibility for an executor. A listing compiled by you will be more authoritative and less open to challenge by beneficiaries of your will. An up-to-date inventory is also useful for insurance purposes (do you really know the value of your collection?) and for claims in the event of loss by theft or fire.

So, what should be in your listing? Whoever is disposing of your collection will need to be able to identify all the items in enough detail to describe them accurately to potential buyers, and will need information about their condition and value. It is sometimes difficult for another person to identify models you bought forty years ago. I was once baffled by a small collection of 0 scale wooden railway buildings apparently based on Pacific North-West prototypes. I eventually found them in an old Rivarossi catalogue! While the original purchase price may not be directly related to current value, it can certainly help for many items, especially for someone not familiar with the market.

The easiest way to create, maintain and present this information is by a simple spreadsheet. Some modellers may prefer to create a hand written list beforehand, the guidelines still apply. I have used the example shown here successfully for a couple of fairly large collections, and I can provide blank copies in Excel or QuattroPro to members if they wish. There are also commercial systems available, though some of them seem to be designed mainly for rolling stock.

I find it convenient to organise the list by type of material, e.g., Locomotives, Passenger Stock, Freight Stock, Track, Structures, Control Equipment, Books, Magazines, and Miscellaneous. Potential buyers may well be focussed on one or other of these categories. Within these main categories, I like to list items by Manufacturer, again, this is convenient for buyers. Another option is to organise the list by Railway Company.

Most of the columns in the spreadsheet should be self-explanatory, but just in case here are my suggestions:

[A] Inventory No.: When selling the collection, it is useful to be able to identify each item with a unique number. This can go on a label, along with the price, when selling at a show or swap meet. A simple code can be incorporated to help organise the list.

[B] Manufacturer: Helps to distinguish the item for buyers; not everything is labelled!

[C] Catalogue No.: Useful if you know or can find it, to identify the item exactly.

[D] Scale/Gauge: Use a well-known code, e.g. 00, EM, S4, H0n3, 1:48 etc.

[E] Description: Make this as complete as possible, use more lines if necessary. Include condition information, couplers or modifications, etc.

[F] Box: So often the value of a model depends on the availability of a box. Boxes are often stored away but if there is no box you might save the executor some time

[G] Remarks: This may be used to compliment the description. If this item to be bequeathed, to whom? If there a photograph of the model, how is it identified, where is it stored?

[H] Unit: I use "ea" for single items; some things come in boxes of n items, etc.

[I] Quantity: How many you have.

[J] Purchase Price: Write down what you know.

This spreadsheet is based on those I have used to dispose of three fairly large collections in the past. Now, I really must update my own lists!

Worked Example

All inventories are documents in work. An example is shown below and as a full size attachment.

[A]	[B]	[C]	[D]	[E]	[F]	[G]	[H]	[I]	[J]	
DATE:	2013-11-10	GENERAL NOTES: Fred's 00 Gauge Engines RAILWAY COLLECTION Unless otherwise stated all engines are in running condition.				PAGE:	1	OF:	4	
INVENTORY NO.	MANUFACTURER	CAT. NO.	SCALE/ GAUGE	DESCRIPTION	BOX	REMARKS	UNIT	QTY.	PURCHASE PRICE	
LOCOMOTIVES:										
99-1	00-E-1	Wrenn	2240/5	00	8465, LMS Stanier BF 2-8-0	Yes	Hornby-Dublo, Kadee Couplings	ea	1	40.00
	00-E-2	Bachmann	32-911	00	BR Class 108 3-unit DMU	No		ea	1	205.00
	00-E-3	Lima	5106MW	00	9006 BR Class 55 Co-Co Deltic	Yes	From Jane's Father	ea	1	60.00
					The Fife and Forfar Yeomanry					
99-2	00-E-4	Hornby	R06623097	00	6233 LMS 8XP 4-6-2	Yes	Gears & tyres replaced Mar 2010	ea	1	60.00
	00-E-5	Hornby	R22572202	00	Duchess of Sutherland	Yes		ea	1	200.00
					5055 LMS SP5F 4-6-0 Black 5					
	WAGONS				00 Gauge					
	00-W-1	ASSORTED COM		00	PO + LMS + LNER	No	Kadee Couplings	-	6	30.00
	BOOKS									
99-3	B-1	ASSORTED LMS			PROTOTYPE HB + PB		MOSTLY BRUISED	Set of 10		90.00
	B-2	ASSORTED LMS			PROTOTYPE HB		PRISTINE	ea		
	B-3				LMS COACHES		JENKINSON DAVID	ea	1	20.00
	COACHES				00 GAUGE					
	00-C-1	TRIANG	MISC	00	LMS CRIMSON LAKE	No	RARE 1st, 2nd 3rd BRASS set	6		60.00
	LOCOMOTIVES				G. GAUGE					
	G.E.1	ROUNDHOUSE		R	LADY ANN'S - 0-4-0	No	1973 - PRISTINE	ea	1	900.00
					LIVE STEAM		RADIO CONTROLLED			
	COACHES				C. GAUGE					
	G.C.1	LGB	32190	R	POST BALLAGE - GREEN	Yes	FITTED WITH CENTRE BUFF	ea	1	120.00
	G.C.2	LGB	30300	G	OPEN CORRIDOR GREEN	Yes	" " " "	ea	1	120.00
	G.C.3	LGB	3050	R	3RD CLASS CLESTON ROOF	Yes	" " " "	ea	1	120.00
	G.C.4	LGB	407	R	4TH CLASS " "	Yes	" " " "	ea	1	120.00
	CARS									
	C-1	LLEDO		1:48	NORTHERN PAIRISI - FORD	Yes		SET	1	30.00
					STAKE TRUCK					
					THORNER					
					VAN					
	C-2	OXFORD	762003	1:76	TRUMP MATFLOWER 1948	Yes	BLUE - SAME AS SUE'S DAD HAD		1	8.00

The information in blue has been entered into the spreadsheet and mark-ups (corrections and additions) are shown in green. If you don't want to use a spreadsheet at all that works fine also.

Don't waste time adding unnecessary details. The first handwritten entry (in green) is for 6 wagons purchased for \$30. The description is vague so inventory numbers should be stuck under the wagons or a photograph taken for future reference.

The example shows a real mix of collectables on one sheet but in practice it's far better to use one sheet for 00 Gauge Locos, another for 00 Gauge Wagon, 1:48 cars etc. In this way you can simply mark up your sheets as new stock is aquired.

When there is too much blood (the mark-ups get too messy) update the spreadsheet or write out a fresh clean sheet.

The green 99-1, 99-2 and 99-3 markings down the side relate to selling the stuff on the Platelayer's coach and buy stand, but that's another story

DATE: 2013-11-10

GENERAL NOTES:

Fred's 00-Gauge Engines Railway Collection
 Unless otherwise stated all engines are in running condition.

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INVENTORY NO. MANUFACTURER CAT. NO. GAUGE SCALE/

UNIT QTY. PRICE PURCHASE

INVENTORY NO.	MANUFACTURER	CAT. NO.	GAUGE	SCALE/	DESCRIPTION	BOX	REMARKS	UNIT QTY.	PRICE
00-E-1	Wrenn	2240/5	00		8465, LMS Stanier BF 2-8-0	YES	Hornby-Dublo, Kadee couplings	ea	40.00
00-E-2	Bachmann	32-911	00		BR Class 108 3-unit DMU	NO		ea	205.00
00-E-3	Lima	5106/MW	00		9006 BR Class 55 Co-Co Deltic	YES	From Jane's Father	ea	60.00
00-E-4	Hornby	R06623097	00		The Fife and Forfar Yeomanry	YES	Gears & tyres replaced Mar 2010	ea	60.00
00-E-5	Hornby	R22572202	00		Buchess of Sutherland	YES		ea	200.00
					5055 LMS SP5F 4-6-0 Black 5				
	WAGONS.				OO Gauge				
	ASSORTED CON		OO		PO + LMS + LNER	NO	KADEE COUPLINGS	-	6 30.00
	BOOKS								
99.3 B.1	ASSORTED LMS				PROTOTYPE HB+PB		NO	NO	
B.2	ASSORTED LMS				PROTOTYPE HB		NO	NO	
B.3					LMS COACHES		NO	NO	
	COACHES								
00-C.1	TRIANG	MISC	00		LMS CRIMSON LAKE	NO	RAKES 1st 2nd 3rd BRAKE SET	6	60.00
	LOCOMOTIVES								
G.E.1	ROUNDHOUSE		G		G. GAUGE				
	COACHES								
G.C.1	LGB	32199	G		LADY ANNE - 0-4-0	NO	1978 - PRISTINE	ea	1000.00
G.C.2	LGB	30200	G		LIVE STEAM		RADIO CONTROLLED		
G.C.3	LGB	3050	G		C. GAUGE				
G.C.4	LGB	4027	G		POST BALLALUE - GREEN	YES	FITTED WITH CENTRE BUFFER	ea	120.00
	CARS								
C-1	LLEDO		1:48		NORTHERN PAIRIEIS - FORD	YES		SET	1 30.00
					STAKE TRUCK				
					TANKER				
					VAN				
C-2	OXFORD	762MOD3	1:76		TRUMP MATFLOWER 154	YES	BILLS - SAME AS SUE'S DAD	1	8.00

HAD.

