

# Carterton



## The Travelling Showmen

Joe Spurrett first moved to the area in 1897. He tried to buy a plot of land from William Carter in 1900, but they would not sell to him as he had been living there for three years without paying any rent. So instead, Joe's brother-in-law bought the land from William Carter and immediately sold it on to Joe for £22 10 shillings. That plot of land, off Lawton Avenue, became the yard for the steam engine known as the Little Wonder, the roundabouts and a set of boats. There was also a shooting gallery which in those days was looked after by the woman of the family. Bella Spurrett was said to be a good shot and often beat the local gentry in competitions.



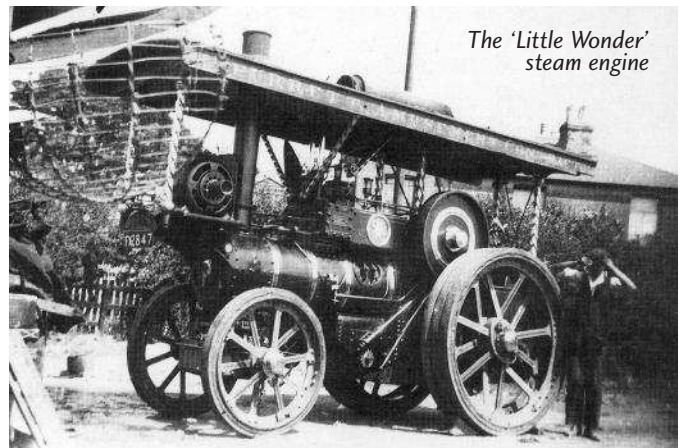
Spurrett's rifle range

As well as being used on the fairgrounds, the Little Wonder was also used to haul lumber on building sites. Joe's son Ernie met his future wife Nora when he was working on the construction of the camp at Upper Heyford. Nora was working there as a secretary.

Spurrett's fairground



The 'Little Wonder' steam engine



Tony Spurrett

Ernie, Nora and their children Tony and Gloria went out travelling after the war. They would leave Carterton in the first week in March and travel to the fairs at Witney, Oxford, Thame, Wallingford, Woodstock and Stow. The family lived in a wagon which they made themselves. Ernie died in the wagon in 1964 and Nora went on travelling until she died in 1989 aged 91.