Sagatukett River RR. track plan

A layout for lots of switching with a modest amount of shelf space around the room

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THE layout of the Sagatukett River RR. was inspired by the story of the West River RR. which I read in the book *36 Miles of Trouble* by Victor Morse. The prototype and my model project represent a shortline common carrier in New England. The model version connects the terminals of Jackpine and Equinox. From midpoint station Tinkle Creek, a branch extends to a third terminal at Corbel. The pike is designed for a maximum of switching operation with a minimum of trackwork. There are about 20 turnouts. Using handlaid track, I would build the three-way turnout at Jackpine as a stub type.

Industries along the line are of a general nature providing varied cross traffic between stations. A small logging camp is located on the Corbel branch. Logs are freighted from there to Jackpine, where they are dumped into the pond by a jill poke.

The trestle builder has plenty of opportunity to display his art. Don't build them too stoutly, though: a railroad like this should have spindly trestles. A boxcar or two floating in the river near the collapsed trestle, surrounded by a salvage crew, would make an interesting scene.

The storage track at Jackpine can serve both as a place for equipment between runs and as an imaginary interchange with foreign roads. Since storage is dear on a shelf layout of this kind, a little yard fiddling will help at this point. [A fiddle yard is a track or tracks where equipment is manually rearranged or as often exchanged for other equipment in order to increase the variety of rolling stock available for operations on a model railroad. Usually a fiddle yard is hidden, but not in this instance.]

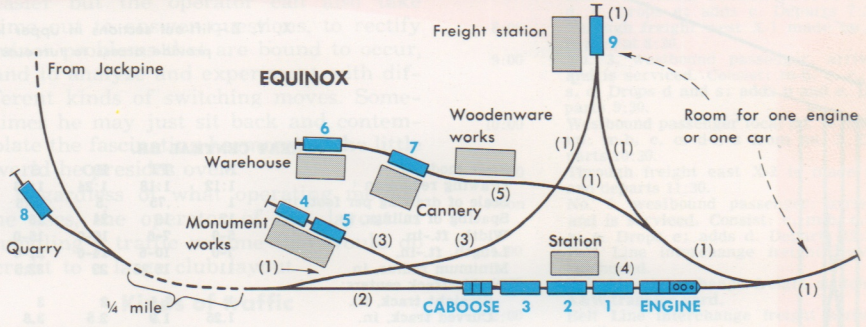
Part of the fun of the SR RR. is in its limitations: The engineer may have a few choice words for the trackbuilders when he finds his train is too long to be run around at Corbel siding. Freight cars commonly get spotted on the turntable lead there. When the switch crewmen at Equinox figure out the easiest way to move a boxcar from the warehouse to the monument works, and to move the boxcar already at the monument works over to the freight house, and still have the engine pointed the right way to leave town, they can count on the arrival of the midday passenger train to gum up the works.

On some prototypes of such makeshift railroads — the West River RR., for example — derailments occurred almost with timetable accuracy. While I don't suggest building an automatic derailer, I do suggest that rather than cussing at the locomotive the way I usually do, you use derailment as an excuse to run a work train. This train could consist of a boxcar of tools and a passenger car of volunteer helpers loaded at the nearest community. When the train arrives at the scene of the mishap, a little "big hook" action (meaning hand rerailing) is in order.

The layout, as drawn, will fit in a 10 x 15-foot room if you use curves of about 22" (560-mm.) radius. This is about the same whether you build it in HO, On2, or Sn3 size. Other room sizes for other model scales and gauges are indicated in the specification table — but note that the aisleway will be too narrow between Corbel and Equinox if you build with less than 22" radius, as in N or TT scales or HOn3, etc. In such cases the room should be widened about 1 foot (300 mm.), and this much extra table should be inserted into the benchwork at the zones marked N1 and N2 on the main drawing.

Note that you can use the same track plan almost unchanged for narrow-gauge layouts of a larger scale. For example, a 22" radius can fit this layout into a 10 x 15-foot room in either HO standard, Sn3, or On2 gauge. But when using the larger scales for narrow gauge, track center separations will have to be increased over the HO version. Also, grades and elevations will have to be increased. The amount of increase is dependent upon the width and height of the narrow-gauge equipment, but a 50 percent increase is more than enough for 36"-gauge modeling and 80 percent is probably sufficient for On2, etc. The 2.7 percent grades then become 4.1 percent and 4.9 percent respectively.

MAXIMUM SWITCHING — MINIMUM SPACE

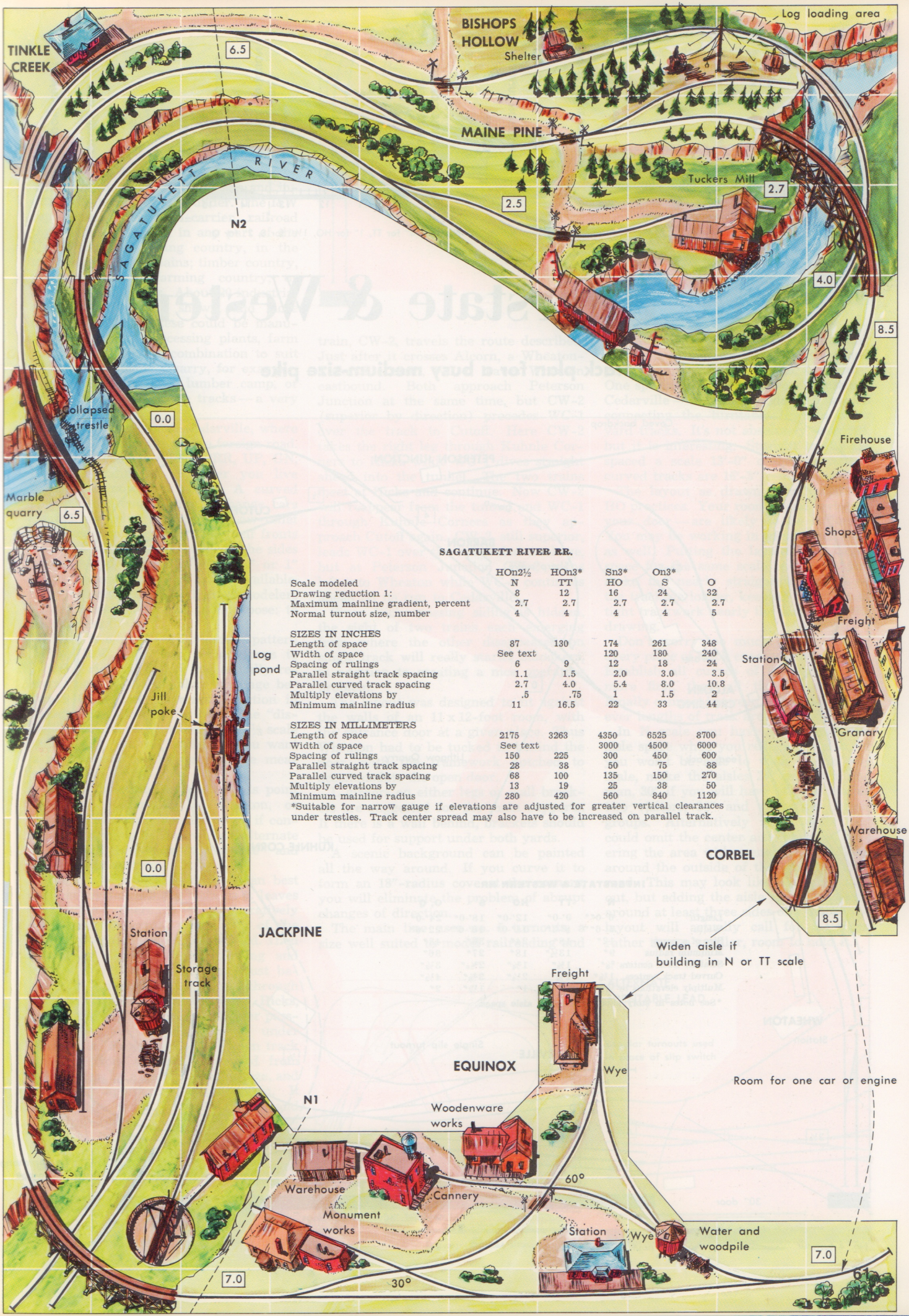


HERE'S a little problem on the Sagatukett River RR. layout that you might like to solve with the least number of moves: A train crew has arrived at Equinox and is receiving its switching instructions from the agent: see sketch of situation. Count as one move each time the engine starts. Uncoupling and reversing direction must be done stopped. Cars cannot be kicked, poled, nor rolled by hand or gravity.

The switch list shows that cars 4, 7, and 9 are to be picked up and eventually taken to Jackpine. Cars 1, 2, and 3 are for the warehouse, freight station, and woodenware works respectively. Car 8 has a load of rough stone to be switched to the monument works. Car 5 has finished stone for the warehouse. Car 6 is an empty flat to go to the quarry. The pickups 4, 7, and 9 are to be taken with engine ahead, pointed properly, and caboose behind as the final move to Jackpine.

In case track capacity affects your solution, the number of cars that can be spotted in the clear on each part of the layout is shown in parentheses. One additional car can stand on any turnout or crossing not otherwise in use.

Since the caboose is fouling a switch at the beginning, the only practical first move is either to back the train or to uncouple the engine alone to move it around the wye. You go on from there.



SAGATUKETT RIVER RR.

	HOn2½	HOn3*	Sn3*	On3*	
Scale modeled	N	TT	HO	S	O
Drawing reduction 1:	8	12	16	24	32
Maximum mainline gradient, percent	2.7	2.7	2.7	2.7	2.7
Normal turnout size, number	4	4	4	4	5
SIZES IN INCHES					
Length of space	87	130	174	261	348
Width of space	See text		120	180	240
Spacing of rulings	6	9	12	18	24
Parallel straight track spacing	1.1	1.5	2.0	3.0	3.5
Parallel curved track spacing	2.7	4.0	5.4	8.0	10.8
Multiply elevations by	.5	.75	1	1.5	2
Minimum mainline radius	11	16.5	22	33	44
SIZES IN MILLIMETERS					
Length of space	2175	3263	4350	6525	8700
Width of space	See text		3000	4500	6000
Spacing of rulings	150	225	300	450	600
Parallel straight track spacing	28	38	50	75	88
Parallel curved track spacing	68	100	135	150	270
Multiply elevations by	13	19	25	38	50
Minimum mainline radius	280	420	560	840	1120

*Suitable for narrow gauge if elevations are adjusted for greater vertical clearances under trestles. Track center spread may also have to be increased on parallel track.