



These are the track modules I'm working with at the present time. The nice thing about trackwork components is that they aren't perishable.

As the illustration shows, the station is surrounded by a large platform made up of wood planks. I sort of cleaned

out the vendor's supply of stripwood creating my first platform, sawing the pieces into 12' lengths and scribing wood grain into it. Today, thankfully, I'd use a NWSL Chopper to cut the stripwood. One of the keys to success was to use Weather-It to pre-stain the strips, varying the amount of time the planks were immersed. After staining, planks were randomly mixed together, emphasizing the texture of the planking.

One of the interesting features to both my original and current attempts is the way the trolley right of way and the steam tracks are built to dramatically different standards. The tracks purposely parallel each other for several feet, highlighting the comparison. The combination of #4 and #6 switches adds to the contrast between the two construction standards. In addition, the traction line uses Code 100 rail, with weathered rails and submerged ties lacking ballast. The adjacent steam line, however, is built using Code 125 rail and recently applied ballast. The contrast between the two is very pleasing.

Options

So, basically, we have a three- by twelve-foot interchange with railroad and trolley trackage extending off both sides. When incorporating the interchange into a permanent layout, adjacent modules could include a freight house or large factory, a traction line car barn, an additional passing (or run-around) siding or a reverse loop, so trolleys wouldn't have to reverse poles after arrival.

Where did the plan come from? There probably was some inspiration from the way Vermont's Springfield Terminal interchanged with Boston & Maine steam trains across the Connecticut River in Charlestown, NH. The traffic density during the Springfield Terminal's peak years is similar to what I've described above, although the prototype interchange was less elaborate than I've described. Traction modeling permits you to build a lot of action into a small area. In this case, the area is more "open" than usual, and (perhaps for that reason) more conducive to creating a more laid-back atmosphere than found in our current times. ♦

Modest Interurban Interchange Steam Railroad

Flashback: It's 30 years ago, and I'm in the back room of the apartment on top of the Perkinsville, Vermont, general store, Post Office, and fire department. I'm working on a model of an interurban/steam railroad interchange. It's been snowing all day, but I don't care. I've been working with some fascinating and relatively complicated track and overhead work.

Flash Forward: The children that hadn't been born then (thank heavens!), are now grown and out of the house, but I'm still working on the same interurban/steam railroad interchange, which I'm re-creating using a second set of custom trackwork and overhead parts.

Such is the power of a good idea! Thirty years ago, I developed a simple, but flexible, track plan that still fascinates me. It's based on two trackwork components; a pair of #6 right-hand switches with a crossing, and a #4 left-hand turnout next to a #4 single-slip switch.

Goals

My goal was to model an appropriately sized country junction, not an overly ambitious, high-volume, urban or suburban interchange. I wanted to model a junction where anticipated traffic volume would be five or six single or two-car passenger trolleys a day. I also planned for a steeple-cab engine that would exchange five or six freight cars a day with the steam line, and a twice-a-day express motor car visits.

Another goal was to create a more "open" look than many model traction lines I've seen. Numerous tracks and turnouts in a limited area often characterize traction layouts. I, however, wanted to capture the feel of an environment where real estate wasn't so expensive that everything had to be compressed into a small area. My goal is to give the trains room to "breathe", as well as create an "environment" rather than a "station". Finally, I wanted flexibility and easy relocation, a freestanding module that could be picked-up and moved relatively easily, usable with adjoining location-specific modules to the left and right. I

decided on a couple of three foot wide panels of 3/4-inch plywood, one eight feet long, the other four feet long.

Flexibility

What emerged was a steam railroad interchange based on four tracks. There are two mainline steam tracks (A, B), plus a single-track traction line (C), that enter and join two interchange tracks (D, E). The two interchange tracks join (F) behind the station at a spring switch. This permits incoming trolleys to enter and unload at the station (D), advance to the tail track, switch poles, then return via the departure track (C).

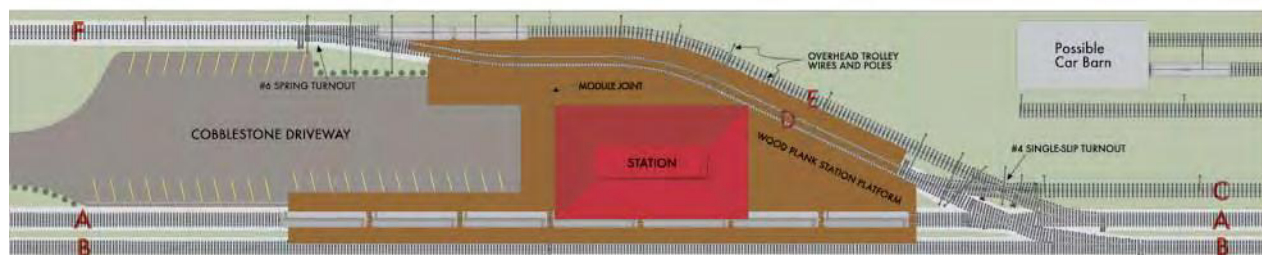
The wiring of the interchange tracks could be switched between two-rail and overhead power, depending on whether the steam line or the traction line was exchanging, dropping off, or picking-up cars.

The resulting module can be either set against a wall or used as a freestanding island. As originally planned, the mainline tracks would be in the front, closest to operators. In this case, the majority of the turnouts could be manually controlled. However, this is not written in stone. Since the station is finished on all four sides, the module can also be operated from behind, with the interchange tracks closest to the operator.

Although the module focuses on the traction line, if there was appropriate room, the steam tracks could also operate. The steam railroad could either be a branchline terminus or a pass-through station, depending on available space. The steam line could also operate to the extent that steam trains can appear and disappear, even if they just proceed to a nearby staging area.

Construction

My original layout was built using custom trackwork kits from Earl Eshleman, using Code 125 nickel-silver rail. After spiking the trackforms down on the ties, the metal spacers were unsoldered and the rails painted. After the module didn't survive its second cross-country move (to a Puget Sound island off Seattle, Wash.), I ordered a second set of crossing turnouts and single slip-switches from Earl.





Traction Action



Roger C. Parker

Decatur, Illinois, 1914, on the Illinois Terminal An ideal focal point for home layouts and display modules

One of the reasons I love railroad books so much is that they lead to wonderful modeling opportunities that you might, otherwise, never discover.

For example, one of the finest traction books to appear last year was Dale Jenkin's *Illinois Terminal: The Route of Friendly Service*. From the perspective of content and White River Production's excellent design and layout, this is one of the most thoroughly satisfying traction books I've ever encountered. (Read my review on the *O Scale Trains* blog.)*

From Dale's book, I discovered the *Flyer Newsletter, The Magazine of Illinois Terminal Railroad History* which represents an equally important resource. The Spring, 2005 issue, (Volume 19, Number 1) of *The Flyer*, in fact, contained an excellent station that could be the nucleus of any home layout or traveling module. On Page 10 of that issue, there was a trackplan of the Wood Street Station, followed by several photographs of the building's 1914-era conversion from a factory to a through-type railroad station.

Traction, Stations, and Model Railroads

Stations play a major role in most of our layouts. Stations not only provide logical beginning and ending points for our runs, but stations also provide a logical place to display our favorite models, even if they're not currently being used. Stations also tell a lot about the communities they were located in, and the financial health of the railroads that built them.

Through-type stations like Decatur's Wood Street Station are especially appropriate for traction layouts, since no backing-up or pole reversal is needed as trains arrive or depart. The Wood

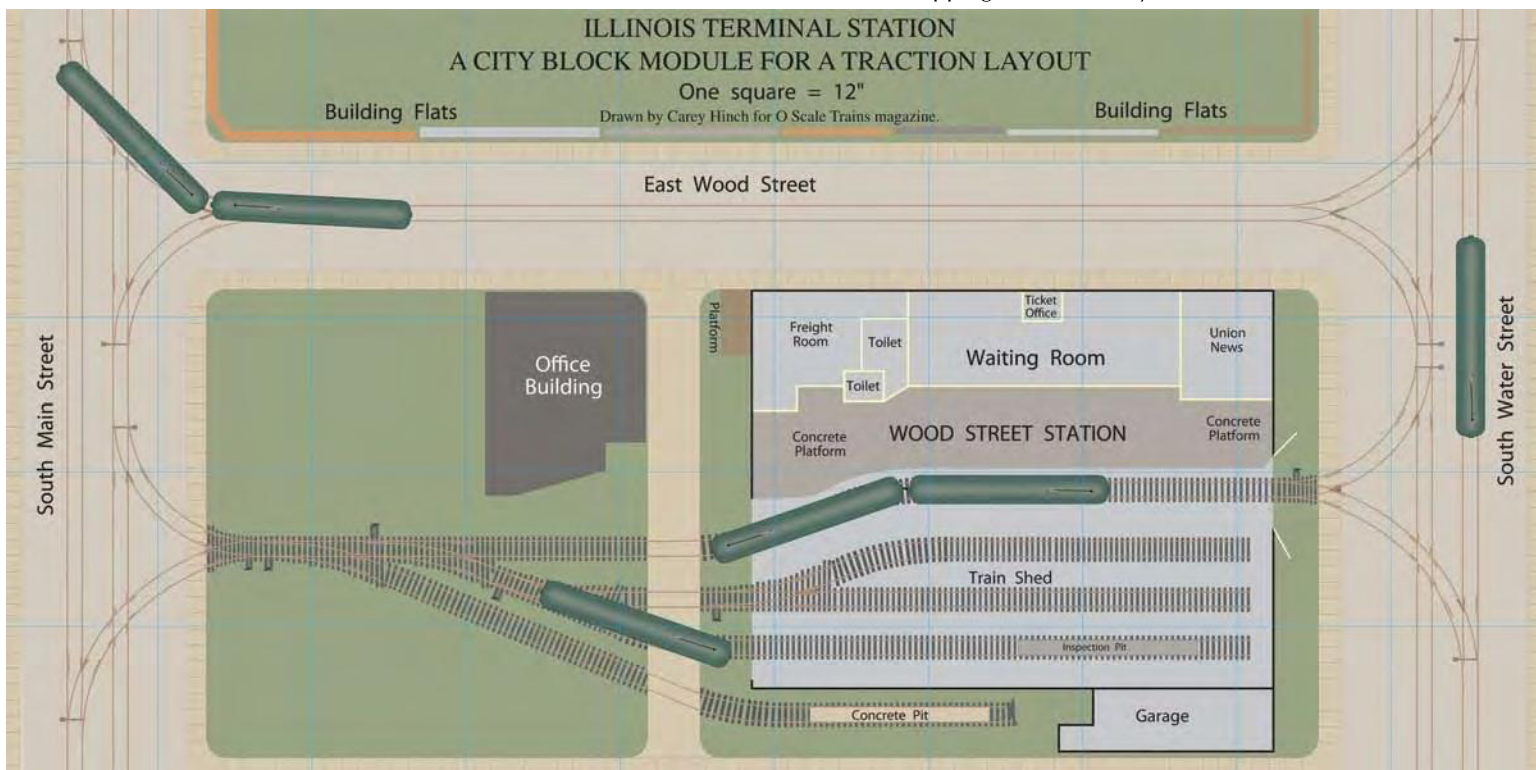
Street Station covered most of a city block. Trains entered a doorway located in the back of the building, and departed from the front of the building which had been opened up to provide access to several tracks.

The Wood Street Station contained a single curving through track, next to a waiting room and concrete platform, plus three additional stub tracks, one of which contained an inspection pit. An additional stub siding along the side of the building also had an inspection pit.

Aesthetically, there's a lot to like about the Wood Street Station. For one thing, when viewed from the front, or "train shed" opening, the through track made a gentle S-curve through the station. This curve, of course, plays to the strength of the short-radius trackage characteristic of traction lines.

More important to creating an authentic atmosphere, the Wood Street Station was not particularly "beautiful." It projects a very utilitarian approach to business, in keeping with the limitations of most traction lines. Recycled from a factory, with the front opened up, the station is thoroughly pragmatic. It's large enough to be a layout centerpiece, but not so large that it will never be completed.

Looking inside the trainshed at the four inside tracks and platform, though, and *The Flyer's* views of the station's utilitarian graphics and signage, you really get a feel for era. This station would definitely create the focal point of a layout or module, allowing three, possibly four, trains to be stored, while other trains snake their way through the building and exit through the front. Properly illuminated, a model of the station would create a definite show-stopping scene for a layout.



Adaptations

Several modifications were made in adapting the station's layout to accommodate present and future layouts. In particular, in place of the Illinois Terminal's single direction of inbound and outbound trains access to the station, Carey Hinch and I decided to offer four alternative routes in and out of the station. This complicated the trackwork, but offers far more flexibility in setting up the station in future homes or temporary displays.

Although we tried to fit the station on a standard 4' x 8' plywood platform, in order to accommodate the added track work, the module comes in at 6' x 10'. Part of the width, however, is for the block of buildings along East Wood Street, which could, if necessary, be eliminated. What's nice about the block of buildings along the top of the drawing, of course, is that it creates an "alley" for trolleys to pass through, adding depth when viewing the module from the bottom, left, or right sides.

An Invitation

Since it's basically a one-story station on a flat landscape, the IT's Wood Street Station in Decatur creates an ambitious, but not daunting, construction project. If any reader decides to attempt it, I hope they will provide "in progress" construction photographs and updates, as this could make a truly fine article series for *O Scale Trains!*

Resources

Illinois Terminal: The Route of Friendly Service

***Review:** <http://www.oscalemag.com/wordpress/index.php?s=illinois+terminal>

Order: <http://illinoistractionsociety.org/Books/Jenkins/JenkinsPromo.html>

The Flyer, Illinois Traction Society

<http://illinoistractionsociety.org/Home.html>

Custom Signals

O SCALE SIGNALS AND SIGNAL SYSTEM FOR THE 21ST CENTURY



**ABS, APB and CTC
signals controlled
by the Custom
Signals' Modular
Signal System**

www.customsignals.com
32 Alexander Blvd.
Poughkeepsie, NY 12603
(845)463-1318 phone/fax

ALLEGHENY SCALE MODELS

O SCALE LOCOMOTIVES & ROLLING STOCK

Custom Building, Repair & Painting Services Available

Buy-Sell-Trade, Consignments-Appraisals, eBay Sales

Website: www.alleghenyscale.com • Email: oscale@alleghenyscale.com

470 Schooley's Mountain Road, Suite 8-117, Hackettstown, New Jersey 07840 • Voice - (908) 684-2070 • Fax - (908) 684-8911

Steam Locomotives

SS 3rd B&O T4a 4-8-2 FP Mint, Factory Sealed	\$1,045
WS C&O T1 2-10-4 UP New	\$1,995
PSC D&RGW L-132 2-8-8-2 FP New, Black Boiler No. 3861	\$3,995
ORI GN R2 2-8-2 UP New, Vestibule Cab	\$2,450
WEAVER NH 15 4-6-4 FP Mint, Late Version, Streamlined	\$925
OMI NP Z-8 4-6-6-4 UP New	\$2,650
PSC N&W Z1b 2-6-6-2 FP New - No. 1462	\$3,250
ORI N&W Auxiliary Water Tender UP New	\$495
Lionel NYC Dreyfus J3a S/L Hudson FP Mint, Box, Case, Poster, Etc.	\$3,195
SS NYC K-5 Pacific UPL/N	\$795
WS PRR J1a 2-10-4 UP New	\$1,995
USH PRR K4 4-6-2 CP L/N, Correct Boiler	\$1,095
USH PRR K4 4-6-2 CP V/G, Correct Boiler	\$650
PSC PRR K4 4-6-2 Modernized FP L/N, Can Motor	\$1,150
PSC SP 75C Vanderbilt Tender UP New, No Box	\$375
PSC SP AC-12 Crown 2-8-8-2 FP New, No. 4290	\$4,995
SS 3rd SP F3 2-10-2 FP Mint, 2 Rail	\$1,195
USH SP MT-3 4-8-2 CP Mint, Never Assembled	\$1,250
USH SP MT-4 4-8-2 CP New, Weathered	\$1,595
DVP SP T-1 Fire Train FP New, 4-6-0, 2 Water Cars	\$1,300
GM Standard 4-4-2 Atlantic Kit UP Mint, General Models Kit	\$325
Kohs UP 9000 Series 4-12-2 FP New, No. 9051	\$3,900
WS UP Big Boy 4-8-8-4 UP New	\$2,750
OMI UP FEF-1 4-8-4 CP New, Coal Version, No. 809	\$1,545
KEY UP FEF-2 4-8-4 UP New, Coal Version, Rare - 1 of 10	\$2,795
OMI UP Unstreamlined 4-6-2 CP New, Added Detail, Coal Version, No. 2888 ..	\$1,495
OMI WM I-2 Decapod 2-10-0 CP New	\$2,295
C&LS WM J-2 Potomac 4-8-4 FP New	\$2,595

Diesel Locomotives

CNJB ALCO S-1 Diesel Switcher UP New, Slight Tarnish	\$625
KEY AT&SF EMD E8 A-B FP New, 1st Run, Warbonnet	\$2,795
OMI AT&SF SD75M FP New, Warbonnet	\$2,295
C&LS C&O ALCO RSD-12 CP L/N, 2 Available, No. 6702, No. 6705	\$1,095
OMI DL&W EMD FT A-B UP New	\$1,395
CNJB LIRR/PRR B1 Electric Switchers, Pair CP EX, No Box, LIRR Nos, 334-335 ..	\$595
OMI N&W C36-7 UP New	\$850

KEY NYC ALCO PA-PB FP New, Lightning Stripe	\$2,695
KEY NYC EMD F7 A-B FP New, 1st Run, Lightning Stripe	\$2,295
OMI NYC FM H-12-44 FP New, Lightning Stripe	\$1,245
KEY PRR ALCO PA-PB FP New, Tuscan 5 stripe	\$2,595
KEY PRR EMD F3 A Unit FP New, Last run, Brunswick Freight	\$1,150
KEY PRR EMD F7 A-B FP New, 1st run, Brunswick Freight	\$2,095
ATLAS PRR FM Erie Built A-B FP New, 2nd Run, Passenger version	\$725
OMI PRR P5a Modified Electric CP EX, No Box, No. 4248	\$695
KEY SP ALCO PA-PB FP New, Daylight	\$2,695
KEY SP EMD E7 A-B FP New, 1st Run, Daylight	\$2,495
KEY SP EMD E9 A-A FP New, 1st Run, Black Widow	\$2,495
KEY UP EMD E9 A-B FP New, 1st Run	\$2,295
KEY UP EMD F7 A-B FP L/N, 1st Run	\$2,000

Rolling Stock

PSC PRR B70 Baggage FP New, PSC 15595-1	\$450
PSC Pullman HWT Dining Car UP New, PSC 15491, Non-Air	\$425
PSC Pullman Standard HWT Observation UP New, PSC 15489-1, w/Air	\$450
PSC Pullman Troop Kitchen Car UP New, PSC 16333	\$375
PSC PRR R50b Express Reefer UP New	\$350
W&R NP 24 Ft. Wood Caboose FP New, Full Interior, Several Versions	\$375
PSC NYC 18000 Series 30' Wood Caboose UP New	\$375
OMI Baldwin Scale Test Car UP New	\$225
PSC Berwind Glaa Twin Hopper CP EX, Clemens Paint	\$160
USH NKP Offset Side Twin Hopper FP EX, Clemens Paint	\$145
RYM NKP Offset Side Twin Hopper CP New, Oval Notched End	\$225
PSC N&W 70 Ton H4 Triple Hopper CP New	\$350
PLTD P&LE - NYC USA Design Steel Box Car UP New, PL-1600	\$375
KMW PRR Gla Twin Hopper CP New, K Series	\$315
PSC PRR Gla Twin Hopper UP New	\$140
PSC PRR GLCa Fishbelly Hopper CP EX, Clemens Paint	\$165
PLTD PRR H21a Quad Hopper UP New	\$175
PLTD PRR H22a Quad Hopper UP New, 1 of 60	\$260
KMW PRR H25 Quad Hopper UP New, K Series, RYM Trucks	\$325
OMI PRR H31c Twin Hopper CP EX, Clemens Paint	\$200
HILLS URTX Wood Billboard Reefer FP New, IGA or Prima	\$375
HOTCHKISS Clear Case Display Cases New, Many Styles - Sizes	Call



Traction Action



Roger C. Parker

Modeling the Montreal & Southern Counties' Home Terminal, Mixing Passenger and Freight Traffic in a Narrow Space

Perhaps I'm prejudiced, owning three Arthur Ford/Gene Deschenes models of Montreal & Southern Counties prototypes, but I find the line to be one of the most "model-able" around. The line used a variety of interurban-scaled passenger and freight rolling stock, running in a variety of urban and rural areas. There were bridges over major rivers and small wayside stations. The line featured a lot of action, including a variety of train lengths; one, two, three, and five car trains were common. There were sections of the line shared with the Central Vermont, and sections of dual-overhead street running shared with local trolleys.

The line's Montreal terminal (located near the foot of McGill Street) is a gem, offering tremendous modeling potential. It was a relatively small station building built in 1909, dwarfed by the Canadian Customs House building, which provides an effective backdrop for the terminal.

Steam Railroad Interchange

Both freight and passenger trains shared the six stub-end tracks of the Montreal terminal. In addition to street loading, there were three stub-end tracks for passengers, plus a three-track interchange yard for freight cars. Arriving and departing single- and multi-car passenger trains in the foreground will form a pleasing contrast to freight cars awaiting pickup by the Grand Trunk Railway (i.e., Canadian National) on the interchange tracks.

The station permits a lot of action in a small space. The Grand Trunk's steam switcher drops off and picks up interchange freight cars in the background, the M&SC's multi-car trains interurban-sized passenger cars arrive and depart, and smaller local trolleys pass on the street.

Setting

The Montreal terminal is not the typical "flat" terminal. There were some subtle changes in elevation between the foreground passenger tracks and the background freight interchange tracks. These elevation changes, enhanced by the Customs House building overlooking the terminal, would provide a great way to showcase your rolling stock as trains await departure.

Flexibility

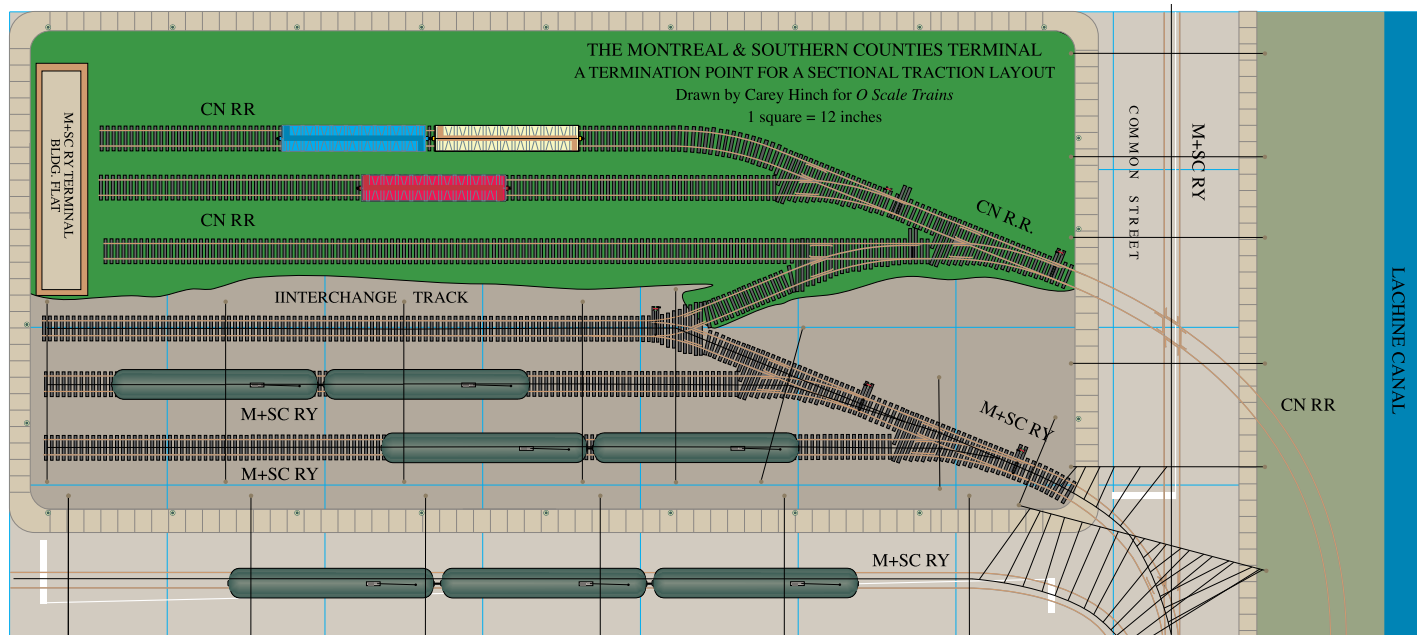
Your model of the Montreal & Southern Counties terminal can be as simple or as elaborate as time and available space dictate. If space is available, you can model the entire terminal, including the surrounding loop track. This scenario would permit your street-running trolleys to pass static trains awaiting departure.

On the other hand, if space is limited, you could simply do a head-on model of the street and terminal tracks, and omit the loop around the terminal. Combined with modeling the Customs House building as a backdrop, this option would simplify construction and reduce the depth needed by between 18" and 24". Either way, no complex or special trackwork, such as slip switches, would be needed.

Documentation

There are several photographs of the Montreal and Southern Counties Montreal terminal in Anthony Clegg and Omer Lavallee's classic *Catenary Through the Counties*. There are also track plans of the station as planned, and as built.

The front cover of J.R. Thomas Grumley's recent *Montreal & Southern Counties Railway Co.* contains a color cover of the terminal that shows the trains, the setting, and the slight difference in elevation of the passenger and freight tracks. ♦





Traction Action



Roger C. Parker

Modeling the Baltimore Terminal of the Washington, Baltimore, and Annapolis

Reader email is one of the nicest aspects about writing this column. Gerald Brothers, a reader in South Dakota, recently contacted me, and we've gotten to emailing back and forth about favorite traction books. He mentioned one of his favorites, *Every Hour on the Hour, a Chronicle of the Washington, Baltimore, and Annapolis Electric Railroad*, by John R. Merriken and Leroy O. King.

He mentioned several maps of terminals in the book. I was about to go online to order a copy, when my wife asked, "What's wrong with the copy downstairs?" She was right; I already had a copy! (Oh well. It's only money.)

The maps were as good as promised. The line's namesake terminals in Baltimore and Washington cry out to be modeled. The Baltimore terminal, shown below, is the larger of the two. It had four stub-end tracks, plus a turning loop and three passing tracks. The Washington terminal, to be described in the next issue, takes up less space and contains a loop with three tracks.

Baltimore Terminal

Notable elements of the Baltimore terminal include the large covered platforms for both the stub tracks as well as the loop. The structure covers both the boarding areas as well as the tracks, creating an interesting "tunnel effect" as the trains enter and emerge. Yet, since the sides of the platform are open, trains are easy to access if required.

Less-than-carload (LCL) freight and express played a major role in the Washington, Baltimore, and Annapolis' revenues. Accord-

ingly, there is a long freight siding along the bottom of the terminal. Since the majority of the terminal trackage is paved, the ties used on the freight track will form an interesting contrast. In addition, the freight track is on a slope about four feet higher than the passenger tracks, heightening the contrast.

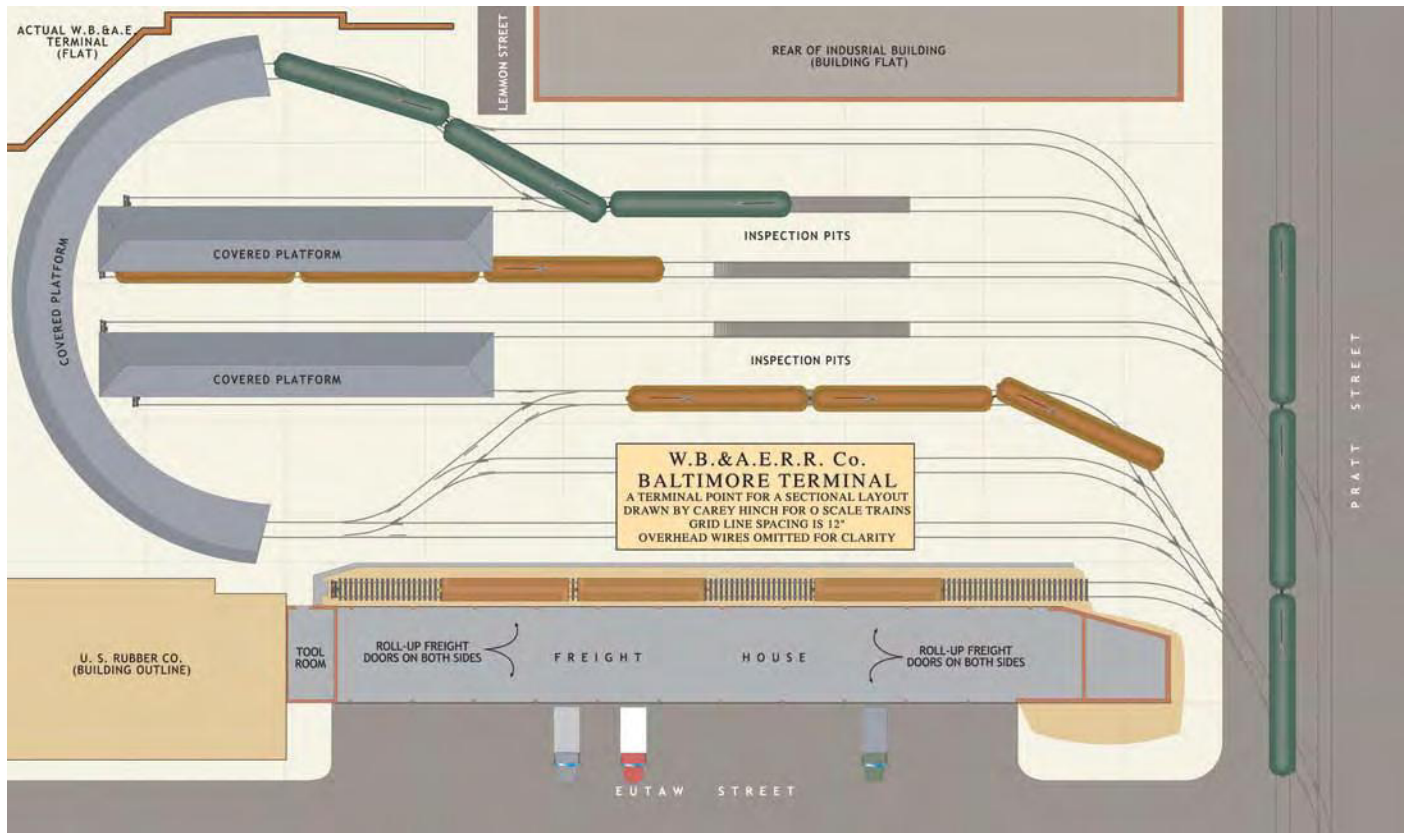
We opted to include the driveway in front of the freight house in the terminal module. This provides space for a variety of trucks awaiting loading and unloading. Interest in the foreground could be enhanced by paving the driveway with cobblestones or bricks. If space is at a premium, the driveway could be reduced in width.

Note the two inspection pits. How would today's litigious society, and OSHA, feel about open pits in the middle of a terminal without fencing? Were people more careful in those days?

Like several of the terminals described in previous columns, building flats and painted backgrounds can be used to create an urban atmosphere. One of the nicest aspects of this terminal is that it's situated in a "box canyon" with buildings on three sides, focusing the viewer's attention on the terminal.

Operations

The original terminal could accommodate almost 50 cars at a time. We've applied some selective compression and, accordingly, capacity is reduced. Yet, there's still room for a half dozen two, three, and four-car passenger trains, plus a string of express and freight cars, to be on hand at any given time. That's certainly enough space to showcase your favorite equipment, and still operate trains into and out of the facility. ♦





Traction Action



Roger C. Parker

Modeling The Washington, DC, Terminal of the Washington, Baltimore, & Annapolis Railroad

In the last issue, we covered the Baltimore terminal of the Washington, Baltimore, & Annapolis Railroad. The Baltimore terminal was a large multi-track installation, capable of storing several trains at one time. It contained a return loop, covered platforms, passing sidings, several storage tracks, and a large freight house.

This time we consider the Washington, DC, terminal at the other end of the line, in higher-rent territory. In contrast to the Baltimore Terminal, the trackplan of the line's Washington Terminal is considerably simpler. Here, reversing the cars for the return journey takes place on a loop located on adjacent city streets. All trains enter from the same direction, stop to disembark and load passengers, and depart relatively quickly.

The Washington infrastructure consists of just three passing sidings, open platforms, and a relatively large waiting room located on a roughly triangular plot of land.

Advantages for Modelers

The Washington terminal of the WB&A, as based on photographs and drawings in John E. Merriken's excellent *Every Hour on the Hour* (1993), offers modelers and module builders numerous modeling advantages.

1. *Simple Trackplan:* The trackplan is relatively simple, thus reducing costs and speeding construction. There are relatively few turnouts to be built, and several can be spring switches. The single-slip switch on New York Avenue does not have to operate, but can simply exist as a crossing. Likewise, the switches and trackwork on Eleventh Avenue do not have to initially operate.

2. *Easier Overhead Construction:* Since the trackwork is relatively simple, the overhead construction can be relatively straightforward. Perfect overhead operation is only needed for the most commonly used routings.

3. *Freedom from Platform Canopies or Trainsheds:* The lack of platform canopies will make it easier to manually raise and lower trolley poles and to make any overhead adjustments necessary.

4. *Station Detailing:* The terminal, itself, can be as simple or as complex as desired. The terminal interiors can be completely detailed, or the emphasis can be on making the trainshed and track areas as detailed as desired. The station courtyard, too, could be detailed with models of period cars

and taxis.

5. *Operation:* Although the trackplan is relatively simple, there is space for continuous operation while showcasing two or more trains (depending on length) at the platforms. Operation could be automated so that the arrival of one train will be accompanied by the departure of another.

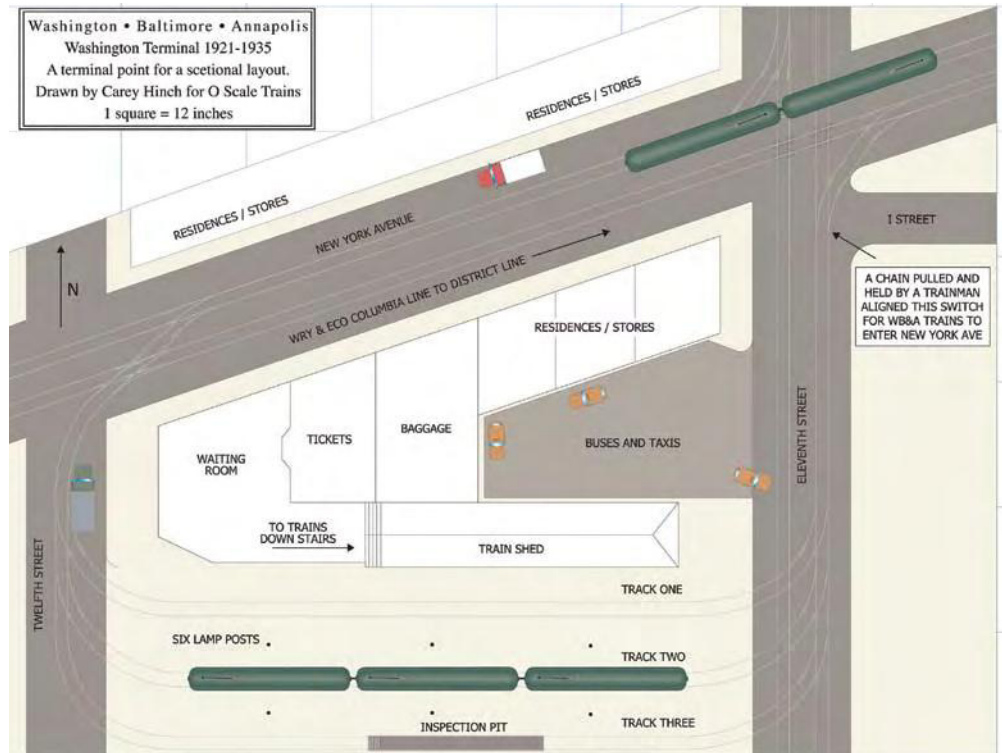
6. *Variety:* Depending on available space, the Washington, Baltimore, & Annapolis' heavy interurban traffic could be mixed with local streetcar service on the adjacent streets. The contrast in size between the city and interurban cars could be very pleasing.

7. *Scenery:* The adjacent Hotel Annapolis, which would be located along the bottom edge of the terminal plan, could provide a large view-block, or background. This, in conjunction with the buildings along New York Avenue, creates a pleasing impression of an "urban canyon" on New York Avenue.

8. *Comic Relief:* Notice that, once again, the station area contains an unfenced inspection pit that could cause an unwanted surprise for unwary passengers or pedestrians. I wonder what OSHA would say!

What's Your Favorite?

Do you have any suggestions or favorite prototype trackplans you'd like me to include in future columns? Send references, or drawings, to me at roger@oscalemag.com and I'll try to cover them in future issues! ♦





Traction Action

Roger C. Parker



Tower Hill Terminal, With Added Reversing Capability

One of the nicest aspects of preparing this column is the reader mail I receive. These often contain suggestions for upcoming columns. One of the most interesting was from Bill Culiton, encouraging me to write about the Niagara, Saint Catharines and Toronto terminal in Niagara Falls, Ontario, as described in John Mill's book on the line.

The Tower Hill Terminal is large enough to have "presence" as the focal point of a busy home layout or module, yet the trackwork is relatively simple, or at least it was in the original!

Focal Point

The Tower Hill Station, itself, is large enough to create a very memorable structure, but is compact enough to be modeled in its entirety (as contrasted to a building flat). The tower, overlooking Niagara Falls, could become the focal point of the layout. The carefully fitted stones walls of the terminal, built in English Tudor fashion, would also set the Tower Hill Terminal apart from the ordinary. Walls were assembled of rough-cut multi-colored stones of varying sizes and mineral coloration. Definitely, this is not your "everyday" structure!

One of the nicest aspects to the building is that it looks as good from the sides as it does from the front, providing viewers with several pleasing perspectives. Also in its favor, as a modeling project, is the structure's emphasis on height, rather than width or depth. With a little selective compression, if necessary, the building would be large enough to be noticed, yet not so large that it dwarfs adjacent scenery.

As a final plus in its favor, the Tower Hill Terminal building was slightly elevated and set back from the road. Stone steps, landscaping, and grass separate it from the road and emphasize the building's height.

Although it is considered by many to be one of the finest terminals of any electric railroad, it lasted just 14 years before closure and destruction.

Original Trackwork

The original track layout was very simple. Access was never the terminal's strong point, as arriving and departing cars had to share a single track running down adjacent Bridge Street. Inside the terminal area, the tracks split into three stub-ended station tracks, plus a freight track adjacent to a nearby street. The stub-ended platform tracks appear to be long enough for two- or possibly three-car trains.

There was also a passing siding along the side of the station, which could be used for either freight or additional passenger car storage.

Adaptations and Changes

Although Tower Hill Terminal, as built, is a beautiful, noteworthy, yet eminently "modelable" prototype, I'd make a single significant change. I want to be able to reverse train direction in order to accommodate single-ended cars as well as to add potential revenue from First Class riders in observation cars (I'm presently having a pair of LaBelle Sacramento Northern cars converted into observation cars.)

Thus, I'd add a wye-track connecting one of the stub-end platform tracks to the passing tracks along the side of the station. This would add lots of operating interest, as reversing trains would snake around equipment loading and unloading at the terminal.

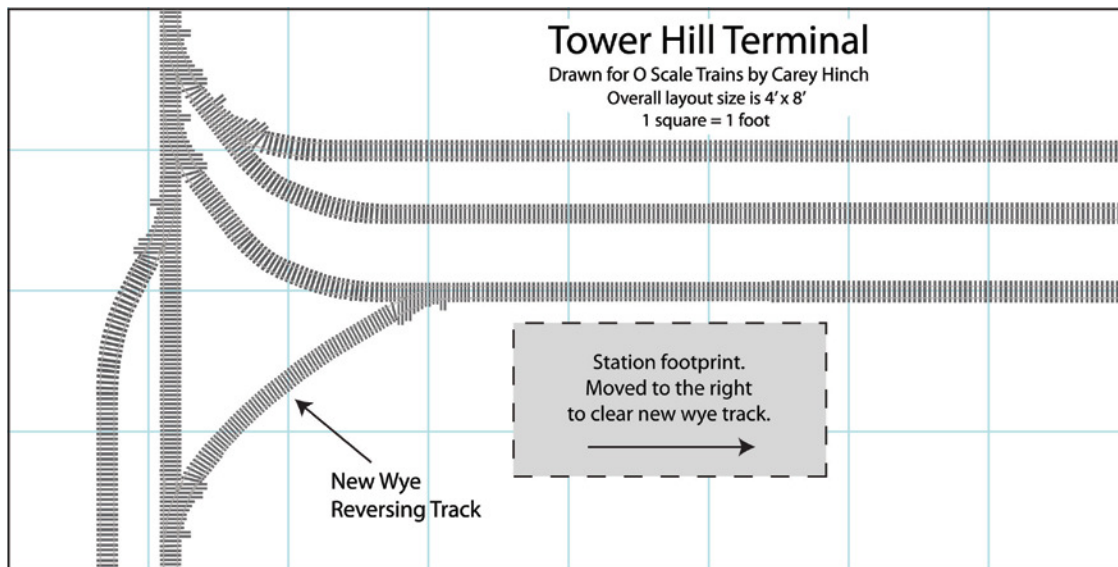
The wye-track would also permit trains to arrive and depart from the bottom of the module as well as the top, adding flexibility to the layout in case it had to be relocated.

To accommodate the added reversing track, of course, the

terminal building itself will have to be moved to the right. Hopefully, all of the key trackage can fit on a single module, simplifying moving from one location to another.

Conclusion

Inspiration can come from anywhere, books, reader mail, or old issues of traction publications. More importantly, the original source of inspiration can be modified as needed to add interest to any present or future layout. ♦





Traction Action

Roger C. Parker



Learning from the Loop at Boston's Government Center

Module idea based on Boston prototype offers operating flexibility and scenic opportunities.

As mentioned in a previous column, Boston is the land of streetcar loops. Loops are used to reverse single-ended streetcars at terminals as well as numerous turn-back locations. Turn-backs permit trains to reverse direction without continuing to the next terminal. They're also used to remove out-of-service cars from trains.

One of Boston's most fascinating loops is at the Government Center station, which replaced the famous—or infamous—Scollay Square station.

What makes Boston's Government Center so fascinating is that the station is built around two loops, permitting trains in either direction to reverse themselves! Not only is this interesting in itself, but it provides inspiration for modules and numerous scenic opportunities.

Operations at Government Center

Government Center is an interchange point on the MBTA's Green Line, i.e., the original Central Subway. Government Center is the interchange point between the Green Line streetcars and the Blue Line subway to the airport, located on a lower level. As a result, it's one of the busiest stations.

As shown by the track plan (Fig. 1), most of the Green Line's Government Center station consists of trackage hidden in tunnels. The station, itself, occupies a triangular area. There are escalators leading to the street, and a stairway leading down to the Blue Line tunnels.

The Government Center station offers Green Line trains

- **Outbound reverse:** Trains from Park Street can reverse direction, proceed around the hidden loop, and return to Park Street.

- **Inbound reverse:** Trains from North Station and Lechmere can pause on the outbound layover track before returning to North Station and Lechmere. The outbound layover track is also used to store cars for traffic peaks after concerts and sporting events at North Station (for generations known as the Boston Garden).

Few turnouts needed

Although the track arrangement offers plenty of operating flexibility, the entire operation only requires just four turnouts. Just two manual, or powered, turnouts determine whether inbound or outbound trains will pass through the station, or reverse direction, after passing through two spring turnouts.

This four-turnout trackplan simplifies laying track and adding the overhead. It also simplifies module set-up at group events or at home.

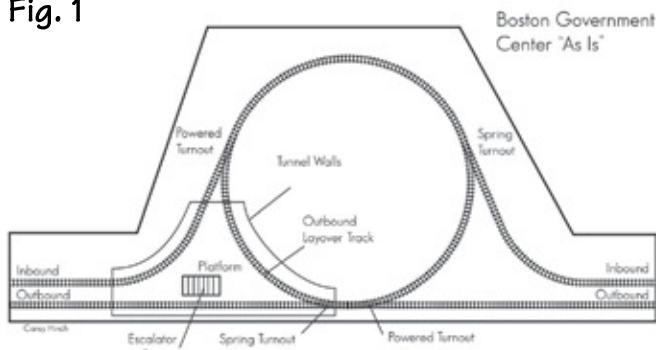
Module opportunities

The inbound and outbound loops at Government Center can be easily adapted to modules for home or traveling layouts. If you build the module to East Penn standards you can attach your model to modules brought by other modelers. Download the standards at [www.eastpenn.org].

The module's potential really takes off when you add a simple diagonal view block that divides the module into separate left and right-hand scenes. With a view block in place, you can create two separate viewing areas, each with its own station scene (Fig. 2).

Although the two stations are actually quite close to each other, they would appear to be miles apart since operators

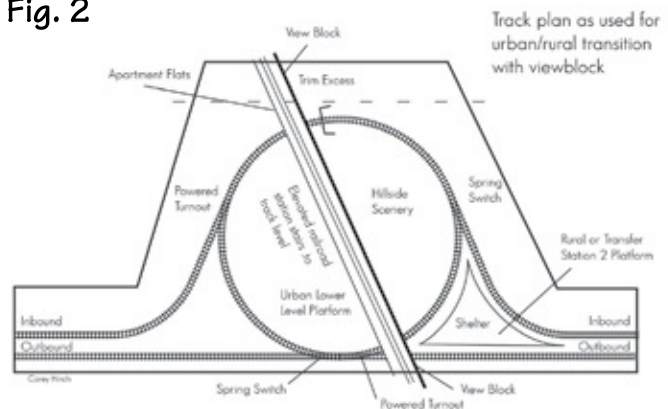
Fig. 1



three options:

- **Normal:** Inbound (i.e., trains heading to Park Street Station) and outbound trains (heading for the Lechmere terminal) can proceed directly through the station.

Fig. 2



and spectators would only see one station at a time. Placing the viewblock at a slight angle would enhance its effectiveness by increasing scenery opportunities on both sides, compared to placing the view block at a 90 degree angle. The view block could be as tall as desired and as appropriate for easy transporting from home to club shows.

For maximum flexibility, I would create an urban setting on the left and a suburban, or rural setting on the right. The urban scene could be modeled on three levels. The highest level would be an elevated road station, the middle level would be a street scene, and the lowest level would be the operating level. Stairways would link the non-operating elevated railroad station with the street and the operating level below. Apartments could be modeled as building flats on the viewblock, or, simply painted on the side of the viewblock.

For maximum impact, the station on the right of the module would represent a suburban transfer station or a rural setting. The right side of the viewblock would be modeled as a hillside, with tunnel portals, or a deep cut, providing a transition to the other side of the module.

In an age where time, money, and space are at a premium, traction modules represent an alternative to complexity and expense. As this module, based on Boston's Government Center station shows, a great deal of operating flexibility and scenic impact can be created with just four turnouts in about 24 square feet! ♦

Many NEW DESIGNS JUST ADDED to our Stores

NEW Alleyway Clutter Series 1 or Series 2 \$11.50 PRE AGED

Industrial Building side Storage Racks Oil Drums, Paint Cans, Barrels, Pipes, Tires N Aged \$8.99 HO Aged \$9.99 O Aged \$11.50 They come each Style is a 2 pack PRE AGED

also NEW REPAIRMANS ROW 3 structure scene

www.modeltechstudios.com 2 stores with DYNAMIC DESIGNS Hundreds of details and kits online today

www.finishedmodels.com

Their "Detailed" and fit in Small areas

MODEL TECH STUDIOS LLC PO Box 1497 N HAMPTON NH 03862 ORDER TODAY AT T: 603.964.5995

NEW in our Small Industry Series Industry #1 \$99.99 Industry #2 \$99.99

Buffalo Grass
Multi-Season Tufts
SILFLOR

NEW from SILFLOR®, **Buffalo Grass Tufts...** These new tufts have young seasonal tone grasses growing at the base with last years longer dead and dry growth sprouting from the center. Tufts are mounted on an invisible base using the secret SILFLOR® process that causes the tuft to stand up and feather outward. Tufts may be placed individually or peeled off in random clusters.

Scenic EXPRESS
Model Landscaping Supplies, Inc.
175 Sheffield Dr, #100, Delmont PA 15626 • 724-468-3106
Order On-Line: www.scenicexpress.com

Etched brass numbers SP-style, MSRP: \$15.

STEAM LOCOMOTIVE NUMBERS
S-162
0 scale
111122223333
444455556666
777788889999
IRISH TRACKLAYER 0.005" brass

More brass numbers coming soon!

Field parts for your interlocking tower: pipe carriers, crank stands and cranks. Visit our web site for details.

The Irish Tracklayer
2682 W. Palo Alto Ave
Fresno CA 93771
www.irishtracklayer.com

**THE GORILLA HAS EVOLVED.
NOW IT GETS STRONGER
FASTER**

GORILLA GLUE
INCREDIBLY STRONG
100% WATERPROOF
STRONGER-FASTER
FOR THE TOUGHEST JOBS ON PLANET EARTH.™
Bonds Wood, Stone, Metal, Ceramics, Foam, Glass & More!

FOR THE TOUGHEST JOBS ON PLANET EARTH.™
1-800-966-3458 • WWW.GORILLATOUGH.COM

© 2008 Gorilla Glue Company SFRH2



Traction Action

Roger C. Parker



Freelance S-Curve Turnback Module

Add new home layout or module possibilities with just 2 turnouts and 1 crossing!

Although adherence to the O Scale module standards established by the East Penn Group is always the best way to ensure maximum compatibility with traction modules built by others, departure from the standards occasionally makes sense. This is especially true for “foreground” modules intended primarily for at-home use, such as the freelanced “small-town” module described this month. The module conforms to the height and electrical and track-separation standards of the East Penn group, but offsets the placement of the tracks entering and leaving the module.

In doing so, the module creates a gentle S-curve that adds visual interest as the tracks swing to the right. More important, the module includes a turn-back loop. By concentrating a layout’s action in a single module, the modeler can invest more time in it, and add to it at a later date.

The main advantage of this track plan is its practicality. Here are some of the advantages.

Simplicity

Although visually interesting, the module’s trackage and overhead are relatively uncomplicated. Only two turnouts are required—one left-hand and one right-hand—plus a single crossing. Only one of the turnouts needs to be powered. As a result, the module represents a practical solution to getting started with a layout that has a future. Using sectional track, this module could be completed relatively quickly, and expanded as desired.

Flexibility

Initially, the module can be considered a terminal. Only the trackage at the “A-end,” or bottom, of the module needs to be completed. In this scenario, every train will proceed through the station and around the loop. (Initially, the turnout at the “B” end will be spiked to direct all trains to the loop.)

If the turnout at the “A” end is made as a spring switch, trains rounding the loop can proceed through the turnout, and reverse direction, before parking on the southbound, or departure track.

Later, the turnout at the “B” end can be powered. This would allow trains to enter and leave this end of the module and proceed to another module. If space is limited, the next module can contain a suggestion of a mainline (perhaps even some abandoned trackage) plus a car barn or factory/industrial area. Another option includes placing it in the middle of a double-track mainline eventually running around all four sides of a room.

Scenery

As the focal point of a layout, numerous structure and ground-cover options allow modelers to keep the module as simple or complex as possible. One of the ways that a modeler could make the module appear much larger than it is involves using street trackage to create a strong visual contrast between the loop and the main line track.

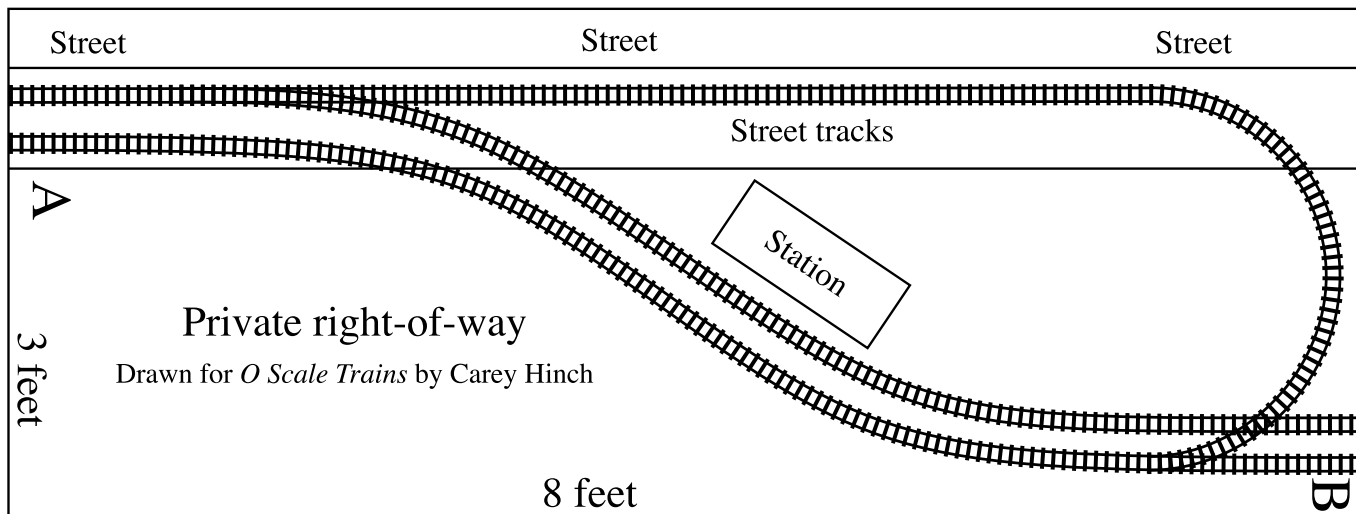
In an urban setting, for example, the S-curved double-tracked mainline might be the street trackage. To emphasize the contrast with the loop trackage, the loop trackage could be set on shallow ties partially submerged into weeds and dirt. This would visually de-emphasize the loop and focus interest on the through tracks.

But, if the module is intended to replicate a small town setting, the location of the street trackage could be reversed. The loop trackage could be set in cobblestones or concrete, and the main line would be ballasted, private right-of-way.

Buildings

Likewise, a variety of options remain for the station and adjacent buildings. The size of the station facilities, for example, can vary from a simple shelter to a standard railroad station with platform shelters extending along the through tracks.

An option that I’m particularly interested in is to model a train shed spanning the two tracks. Although frequently seen in books



about interurban and trolley lines, train sheds seem relatively rare in O Scale. The advantage of adding a train shed to the through tracks of this layout is that—with trains proceed through the shed—there is no need to raise and lower trolley poles in order for arriving trains to prepare for departure.

Yet another option is to consider the module as a traction terminal at an amusement park. During the early 20th century, interurban and trolley lines often built amusement parks outside of town to stimulate weekend travel. The lines often built elaborate, brightly-painted, facilities to serve the large numbers of summertime weekend travelers who were riding the trolleys to cool off and take the family on a low-cost outing.

Trackage

In situations where space is limited, the S-shaped module offers modelers an opportunity to add a compact, two track carbarn, or a carbarn and a small freight station with adjacent team track. Adding additional trackage, of course, detracts from the uncluttered simplicity of the original track plan with the visually appealing twin tracks running through the module on a diagonal.

Adding Your Touch

As always, traction modeling offers modelers opportunities to fine tune a basic track plan to create as simple or complex a scene as desired. The same track plan that could accommodate a suburban turnback a few miles from a congested major met-

ropolitan area can also represent a low-density Midwestern terminal.

In fact, this module could become the basis of a freelanced New England factory town! (Think how great this module would appear with a painted backdrop representing a huge factory or mill, such as found throughout the six state regions.) ♦

When does my subscription expire?

Your subscription expiration is now printed on your mailing label!

BULLFROG
 GET A GRIP!
 Slippery Steamers? GET A GRIP!
 Tepid Traction?
 Deficient Diesels?
 Slothful Switchers?
 NO Disassembly
 NO Special Tools
 Easy Universal
 Liquid Plastic
SNOT
TRACTION TIRES
 WWW.BULLFROGSNOT.COM
 IT WILL CHANGE THE WAY YOU RUN YOUR TRAINS

TOOL-LIGHT
 by Tool-Light
 Set of Three LED Lighted Tweezers
 NEW

Kit includes Three Tweezers, LED Lights, Extra Batteries and Deluxe Case

SRP Only \$19.99

Also available stand alone Retail Clam Shell

Tool-Light is Perfect for:

- Hobbies and Model Making
- Auto and Motorcycle Parts
- Crafts and Jewelry Making
- Needle Works and Quilting
- Handling Very Small Objects
- General Household Usage

www.ToolLights.com

Tool-Light is made of Durable Stainless Steel combined with LED Light.

a new dimension in timeless images...

MORE THAN 50 KITS AVAILABLE FOR LARGE SCALES

Sceniking 5th year!

We're behind you all the way at your hobby shop or www.sceniking.com

SETTING THE STANDARD FOR PHOTO BACKDROP KITS

OUR NEW LARGE SCALES CATALOG

STILL ONLY \$5

send check to:
BPH Enterprises
 4 Palmer Drive
 Barrie, ON L4M 6V9
 Canada
 705-739-4878

AAA 'O' Museum Series Turntables

- 1) Heavy metal construction w/ CNC precision machined parts!
- 2) Adjustable main roller bearing supports the heaviest of engines!
- 3) Twin bridge mounted motors drive bridge on pit rail - smoothly!
- 4) Bridge mounted Infra-Red indexing fits any track /stall spacing!
- 5) Includes Shanty and Arch, Walkways and Brass Handrails!
- 6) Turntable has Sound System and shanty strobe when turning!
- 7) Other specific RR details quoted w/modeler supplied data!
- 8) 3 & 2 Rail Basic & Custom O Scale turntables also available.

• See us at Amherst Rail Show - Springfield MA and TCA YORK PA
AAA Precision Turntables
 PO Box 64 Plantsville CT 06479
 Plantsville Ct 06479
 Phone 860-621-6816
 Fax 860-621-8402
 Web: aaaturntables.com

