

TAMR HOTBOX

THE UN-MAGAZINE OF RAILROADING

ISSUE # 144

SEPTEMBER/AUGUST 1977

MT-1

NEW EDITOR!!

FINAL EDITION****

GREEN STREAK

15¢

FIRST ISSUE FOUR
MONTHS LATE!!

EDITOR PROMISES NEXT ISSUE
ON TIME!

RAILROAD STOCKS
DECLINE IN FIRST
QUARTER OF 1977--
PICKUP EXPECTED SOON

TAMR--
WHERE ARE YOU?!



FROM THE CAB

Hello, I'm Mark Tomlinson, the new Hotbox editor. First, my apologies for this issue coming out four months late. There is no good excuse, but I intend that this will be the last one that comes out late. There is another Hotbox somewhere in the system. It may be in your hands, or it may still be waiting for funds to get it in the mail.

The TAMR is going through another crisis. It seems to happen about every two or three years. Several years the TAMR almost died. There is no reason to believe that it might not this time. The TAMR is run by it's members. The Hotbox is not like a commercial publication. For MR, RMC, RRM and others, you send in your money, sit back, and enjoy the magazine. For anything to happen in the TAMR it has to start with you! The officers which you elected cannot plan all the activities, and the editor cannot write all the articles. Most, if not all of them, have to come from you. Is there a dynamite railfan spot in your area? Issue an invitation to nearby TAMR members to railfan with you. They don't have to be that near. Doug Johnson, Tim Vermande and I spent an afternoon in South Bend. It was only the second time in ten years that I had met any TAMR members face to face. Is there something about your pike that would interest anyone else? Write him about it, send it to me, and you'll see it in the Hotbox. The TAMR starts with you. If you don't do anything, nothing will happen. Do you know what's happening in your region lately? If you don't, have your region leader send something about his activities to the Hotbox. This will not only help the regions but might give valuable information to vacationing TAMR members looking for new places to railfan or to meet new members. So come on regions let's hear from you!

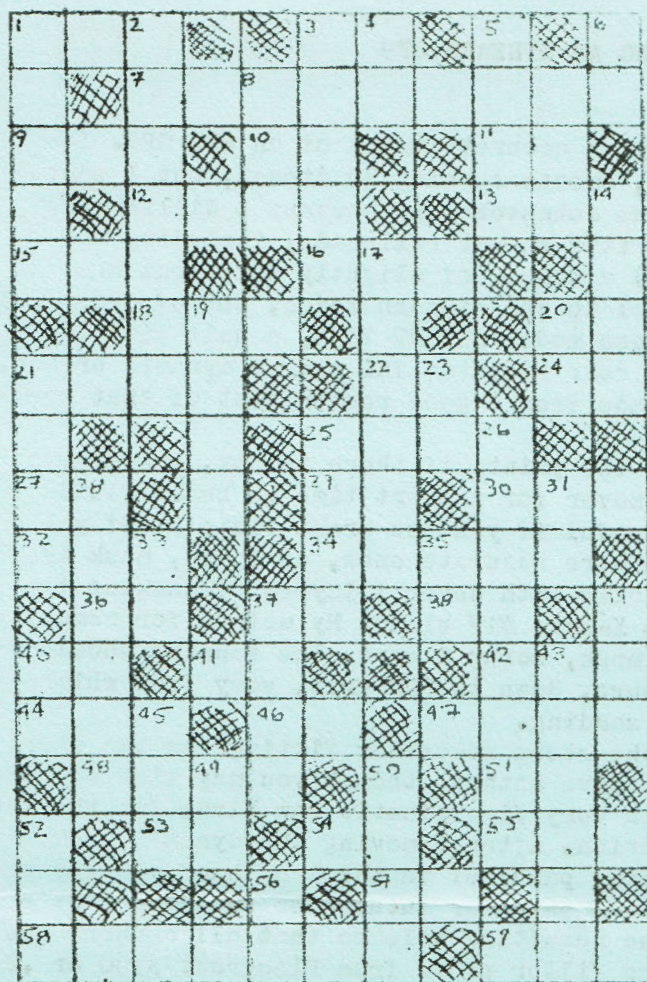
In the meantime, while your looking around for something to do, write an article. After this issue the file contains three articles and one of them is the answer to the crossword puzzle that appears in this issue! I will try to continue the tradition started by Tim Vermande, that is, a Hotbox will come out every two months. Even if it's only the page with your address, the officer's addresses, and my editorial. You'll get it. (TN: But will you like it?) Because the Hotbox is what holds the TAMR together. It provides a way for the officers to tell you what's happening and for members to share their experiences. Without the Hotbox the TAMR will likely just roll over and die.

Starting with issue #145, a regular feature will start. It will be a get to know you page. This page will provide insight to our membership of what you are like, your modelling & prototype tests, etc. etc. However, if it's going to run past issue #146 you need to sit down, write a page about yourself (clear enough so I can read it), and send it to me. If you can send another article with it, so much better. The closing date for issue #145 is September 1, 1977. It should be mailed out by September 30, 1977, and you should receive it about a week later. If you don't write to one of the officers and complain.

IF YOU WANT A TAMR, IT'S UP TO YOU TO MAKE IT WORK!

AD-- Have: MR 6-'41; 9-'57; 5,9,12-'69; 2,4,5,6,7,8,9,11,12 - '70; all '71; 6,8,9,12-'74; 1,3,4,9-'75; RR Magazine 2/59; RMC 7,8-'66, 5-'69; Trains 4-'74, Will sell or trade for certain Trains '69 and before; trolley books & stuff, trolley slides or short line slides. Interested parties contact: Tim Vermande, 51528 Pond Street, South Bend IN 46637.

TIM TONGE: RAILROAD CROSSWORD



ACROSS

1. Sounds like an Indian name.
3. St. Louis, abbr.
7. Louisville and ____.
9. Negative word.
10. Homonym of sew.
11. Company, abbr.
12. ____ Train.
13. Night bird.
15. You breathe it.
16. Follows one.
18. Interstate Commerce Commission, abbr.
20. Great Northern, abbr.
21. Winnie the ____.
22. Baltimore & Ohio, abbr.
24. Same as 20 Down.
25. A group of musicians.
27. Tuberculosis, abbr.
29. Rhymes with has

Across, contd.

30. snakelike fish.
32. ____-box.
34. Clams, crabs, and scallops have these.
36. Same as 10 Across.
37. Secret Service, abbr.
38. Los Angeles, abbr.
40. Being on a plane.
41. Erie-Lackawanna, abbr.
42. A great conflict, fight.
44. 2000 pounds.
46. Neither nor; either ____.
47. We belong to it.
48. New York, Susquehanna and western, abbr.
51. Right, abbr.
53. Canadian Pacific, abbr.
55. Period of time.
56. Has yellow paint scheme with a cat.
59. Missouri-Kansas-Texas, abbr.

DOWN

1. The great ____ Fe.
2. ____ Northland.
3. To discharge a gun.
4. Lehigh Valley, abbr.
5. Locomotive builder.
6. Santa ____.
8. Supersonic Transport, abbr.
14. ____ Island.
17. ____ Cannonball.
19. Steam engines do this.
20. PRR's ____-1.
21. Port Authority Trans-Hudson, abbr.
23. Antonym of off.
25. Freshwater fish.
26. ____ and Hudson.
28. ____ and Maine.
31. Same as 41 Across.
33. Homonym of too.
35. Same as 31 Down.
37. Not fast.
39. American Railroads abbr.
40. Same as 40 Across.
43. Passenger railroad.
45. New York Central, abbr.
49. Southern Pacific, abbr.
50. Morgan's favorite.
52. Florida East Coast abbr.
56. You and I.

UPGRADING AN ATHEARN GP9

The Athearn GP9, is actually an accurate model of an EMD GP7. It is an inexpensive, well-detailed, smooth running HO diesel, but I wanted one a bit more distinctive for the Johnstown, Lackawanna & Williamsport, my road, which leases power from it's parent railroads, including the Erie Lackawanna. Now EL has (had?) a number of slightly different GPs, including ones virtually identical to the Athearn model, but of course, I couldn't pick one of those. I chose model EL GP7 1234, a unit with the winterization hatch covering the rear radiator fan and no dynamic brakes. So after having an enlargement made from a good roster shot of that particular model, I set to work.

The first step is to remove the paint, if there is any, preferably by soaking in Scalecoat paint remover for a short time or brake fluid for about a week (TN: BE very careful if you use brake fluid!). If you replace the cast lift rings with more accurate ones, as I did, mask the surrounding rivets and other details with several layers of masking tape, and scrape them off with a sharp X-Acto #17 blade. My method for removing most detail is the tried & true mask, scrap & sand. The sanding should be done carefully using light pressure, down to 600 grit, very fine which leaves virtually no evidence of sanding.

Now mask the rivets about the steam generator fittings on the short hood and remove these using the above method, though you may wish to remove some of the material with #B13, a very fine plastic saw blade for the X-Acto knife, needed for the next operation. After removing the dynamic brake blisters, take this saw and cutting parallel to the long hood, slowly cut off the large dynamic brake fan and save for future use when you want to construct a GP9 or GP18. File the resulting hole so that all corners are square. Now you must cut a square filler plate from Plastruct .030 or .030 sheet slightly oversize. File this down slowly until there is a tight press fit, then cement with plastic solvent cement from the inside. Plug the holes from the removal of the brake castings with auto body filler or plastic filler, file and sand smooth. I also recommend reinforcing the filler piece with scrap plastic on the interior for further strength. As long as your filling holes, also fill the holes for the left (fireman's side) horns on the short hood. Although EL regards the long hood as front, we won't entertain such nonsense in this article.

Perhaps the easiest way to dress up plastic diesels, including this one, is next. Scrape and sand off the cast grab irons. Now drill holes with a number 78 drill for handholds according to your photograph, or cheat by using the old locations which will probably still be slightly visible if you are as careless as I am. Be careful, I used Northeastern grab irons (cheap for a large quantity) which are slightly wider than original grab irons. Measure the grabirons that you are going to use. Also drill holes for the lift rings now, however, they will not be put on until the end due to their fragility.

I removed the cast on Athearn Handbrake and will replace it with a more detailed casting, assuming I can ever get it from Details West. The plastic one is hard to mask & paint so it looks just right.

Now cut off the classification lights, which are just bumps. Drill a hole with a #72 drill after center punching with a pin. Then drill part way with a #61 or so, and finally feather down this with a #50 until a Detail Associates red class jewel just fits, then save this for the last step before outshooting the unit. Finally, cut away the sloping on the footboards--otherwise your brakeman will slide off in inclement weather to be ground underneath like a nice hamburger..or remove all together to

to conform with current FRA regulations. You may wish to add Detail Associates or Details West m.u. receptacles, m.u. cables, etc. These should probably be saved for the post-painting period, so they won't be damaged.

Now it's time to paint! First, wash the shell in warm water with a little dishwashing detergent added, rinse, then let dry. Here is how I did the EL unit: I first sprayed EL maroon on the general areas where the maroon stripe is to be. After this dried, I masked off the area that will be the maroon stripe and sprayed everything EL gray. Again let it dry, and mask everything but the yellow ends & paint them EL yellow. Finally the pilots should be black. I did not begin with EL yellow as conventional logic would dictate, since Scalecoat yellow does not cover well at all, and this covers EL gray easier than maroon or black. Finally I painted the yellow stripe along the frame by hand. I would recommend painting that before painting the ends yellow, that you paint each numberboard black, then mask the area where the numbers are going to be with something such as Magic Masker, a fluid coating that dries glossy, can be cut to shape, and then peeled off when painting is complete. I didn't and my numbers remain the weak point.

I used Microscale decals and found the Scalecoat paints glossy enough for good application, if not, spray with Floquil gloss before lettering. The yellow stripes around the maroon stripe are tedious to apply but I found careful and slow application pays off here. I found it good to have plenty of water on the general area to be covered so that the decal does not adhere to some other area while you are working somewhere else. After the decal dried, a light (and I mean LIGHT) dose of Solvaset does the trick, a coat of Dullcote blends it into a uniform appearance and a light weathering of grime, particularly on the roof, accents your work.

Now you may apply the lift rings--Detail Associates' are really fine but I found them too fragile for heavy use, Kemtron's brass ones are much sturdier and much too expensive for universal use, so perhaps Northeastern's eyebolts ARE the best solution. A touch of ACC from the underside will secure them, along with the headlight and marker lenses. Drill a hole for the Athearn horn on the long hood where the dynamic brakes used to be, or on the side of the hood, where some units had their horns located and you're ready to put your unit to work.

Now only if the JL&W had a right-of-way for the 1234!

ADVERTISING RATES FOR HOTBOX

Classified ads--Buy-Sell-or Trade for members wishing are 20¢ per line, non-members 30¢, Commercial 35¢ Name and Address printed free!

Pike Ads--Let people know about your pike. Members 25¢ per line, Non-members 30¢ per line.

For a box around the ad, add two extra lines.

Half-page ads (30 lines)-- Members \$4.50, Non-members \$5.50, Commercial \$7.00

Full page ad (60 lines)--Members \$10.00, Non-members \$12.00, Commercial \$14.00

Artwork is charged by complexity and time it takes to do it. For artwork that is camera ready up to 15 lines is 50¢ per ad, over half a page \$1.25 per ad. For non-camera-ready-work a charge of \$5.00 an hour will be charged for preparation of the same. This charge will be billed, with total ad cost, before publication.

Rates are subject to change after publication of notice in the Hotbox.

Send all ads to Mark Kaszniak, Advertising Manager, 4818 W. George st. Chicago, IL. 60641

COAL MINE

In a previous Hotbox, Gary Tempco had an article on how he had modified his Sudyam Purina Chows Mill. I thought I would tell a little bit about what I did to an AHM coal mine kit.

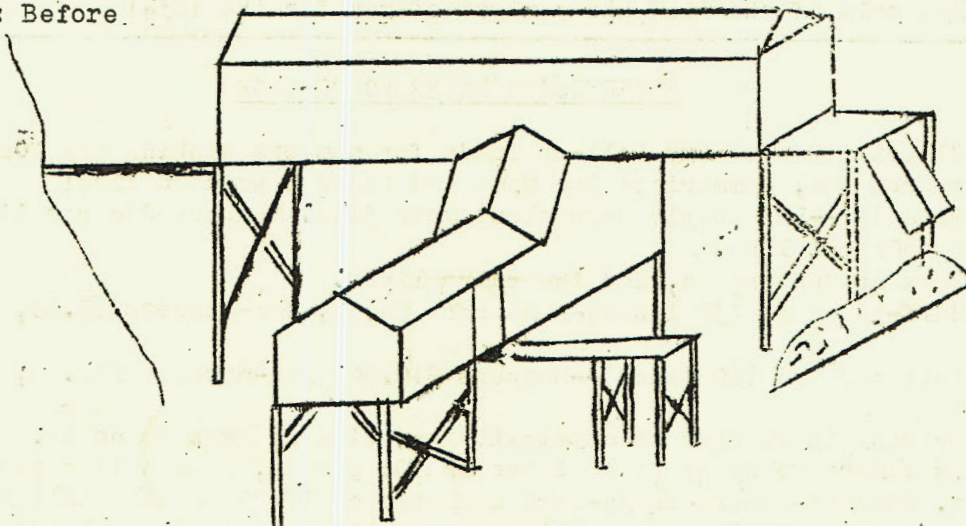
The first thing I did was put it together exactly as the directions specified. Except for the plastic coal piles, it really looked pretty good, although it was big. I laid it aside for some time, until I picked it up again last summer. In the meantime, I had put in the hard shell base of the scenery where I had intended to place the coal mine. However, when I put it in place, it was almost as big as my mountain, I decided a few modifications were in order.

I attacked the problem rather blindly, ripping out walls here and there, but since this was the way the prototype usually acted when a structure did not suit their needs. I think it came out all right. Figures 1&2 are before and after sketches of what I did.

The main modification was the upper part of the original building was moved more to the side and shortened, so that the structure would not tower over everything so much. This involved cutting the far wall which is not visible from the drawings. It also created quite a few new roof lines in the process. These were built mainly from cardstock and leftover plastic I had. The supports were put wherever it seemed logical for the terrain. One last thing I did get rid of was the ugly large shingled roof pieces on the entire building. I replaced it with pieces of cardstock and shingled it using Campbell shingles.

That's about all there was to it. I think the modifications improved the appearance for my location quite a bit. Don't be afraid to change your kits a little bit to suit your own needs and tastes. Finally, if you do maybe you can tell us about it, via the Hotbox, of course!

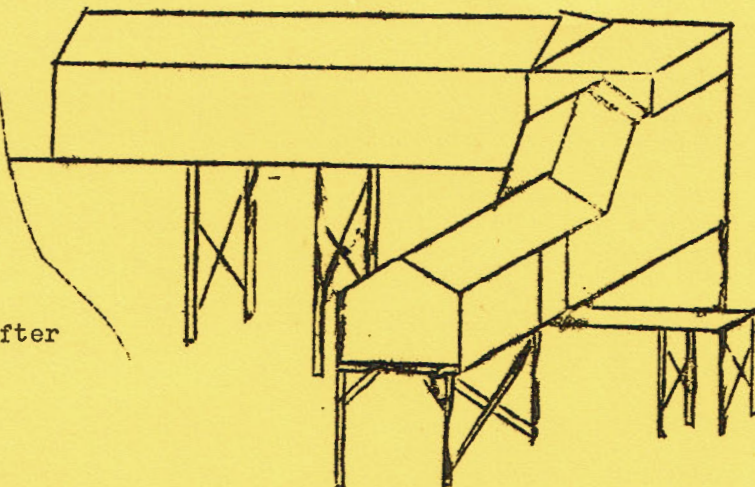
FIGURE 1: Before.



*****ELECTION*****

The election of President & Secretary will appear in the next Hotbox. By order of the Executive Board election nomination deadline has been extended until September 1, 1977--the deadline of the next issue. Results (continued next page) will appear in the next issue!!!

FIGURE 2: After



Electronics hint: Mark Kaszniak

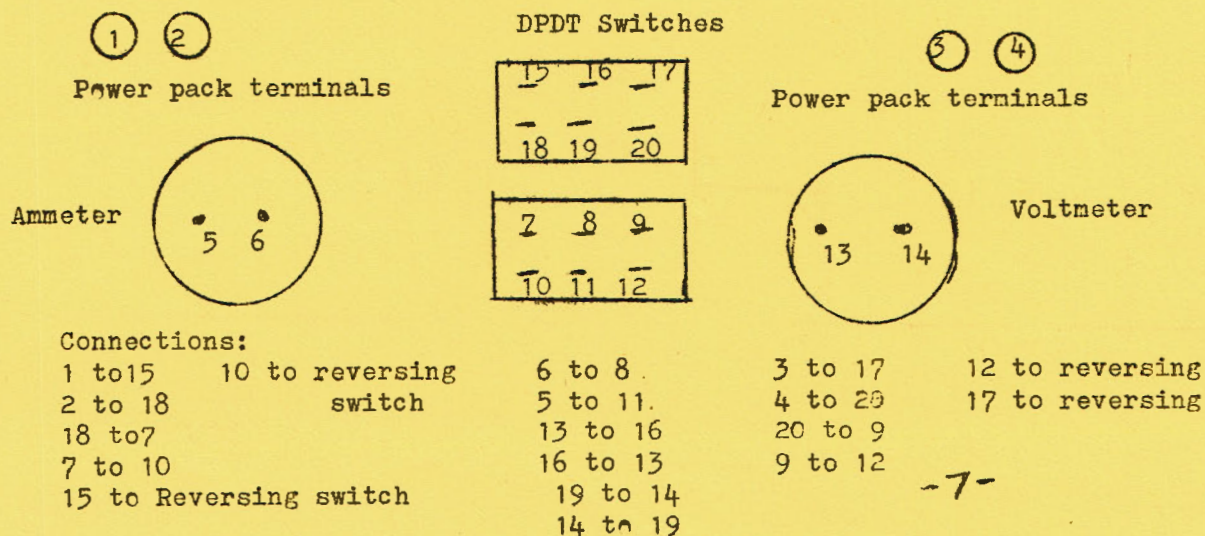
WHY DUPLICATE WHEN YOU DON'T HAVE TO!

We all know that the price of everything is skyrocketing to the point of no return, and we also know in order to troubleshoot your pike you need meters (you don't need them but they help a great deal). So many people include a set in their control panels, most often a set for each throttle. This is one of the most senseless things you can do because you are just duplicating parts that aren't essential to the running of your trains. So why do it? Because many people don't know there is an easier way.

All you need for running two trains (as in a dual cab control system) without an extra set of meters are two DPDT switches of the center-off type. The way you wire them up is a little complicated but the diagram below shows you exactly how to do it by connecting pieces of wire indicated. This system is wired to allow one cab to use both meters, one meter, or none at all. This system has one major drawback, if you use meters of the non-zero center type you will have to abandon the reversing switch on your pack and install another after the meters.

(Note: In connecting the wires to the voltmeter, you will be connecting two wires from the meter to the switch for each lug. The circuit must be wired this way in order for it to work properly!)

Diagram:



STRUCTURE PLANS. (Cont'd)

LEFT SIDE

30'-40'

14'0"

4'0"

2x12 PLANKS

ROOF

16'6"

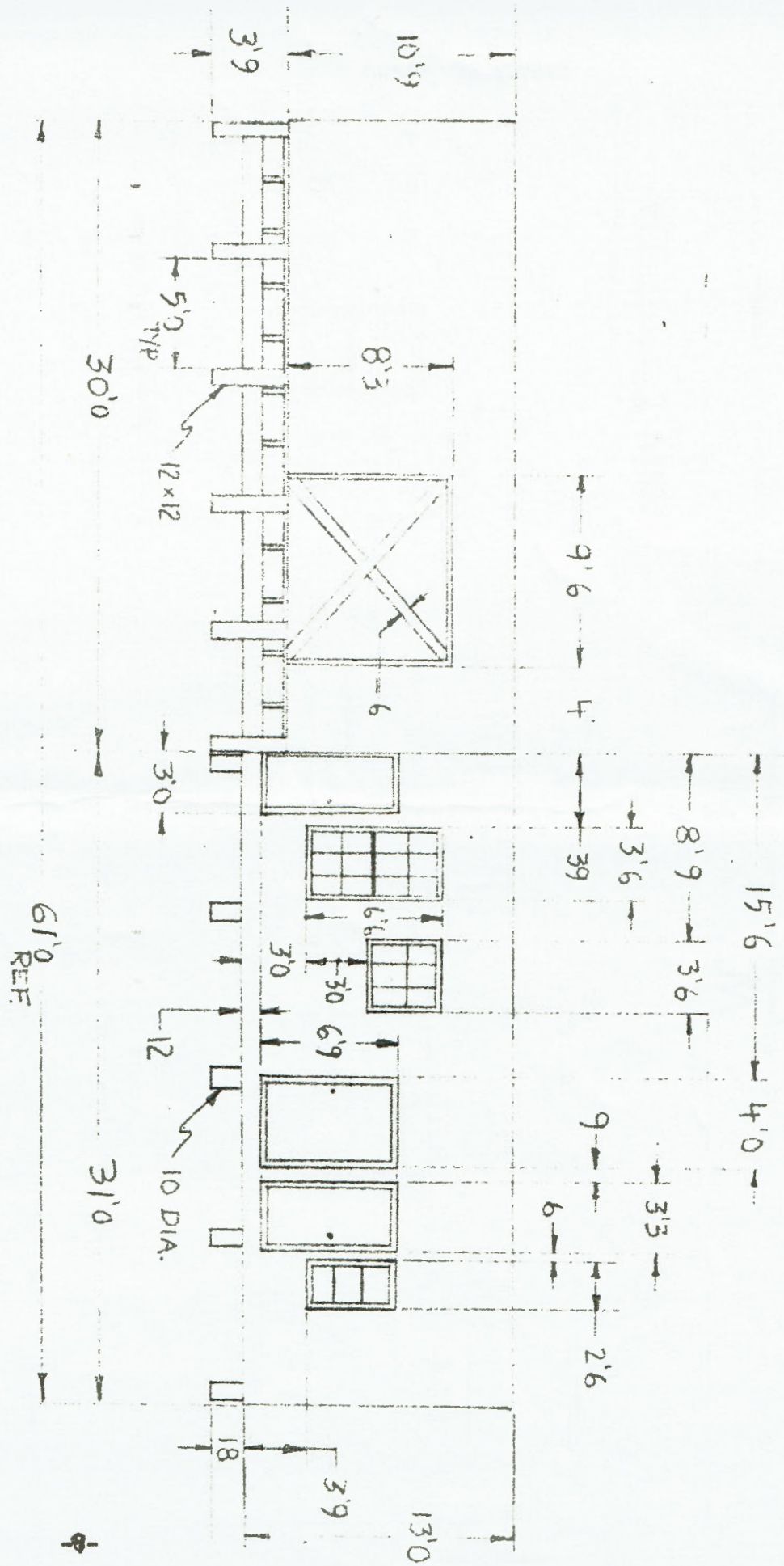
5'0"

4'0"

21'0"

RIGHT SIDE

1/2" SCALE



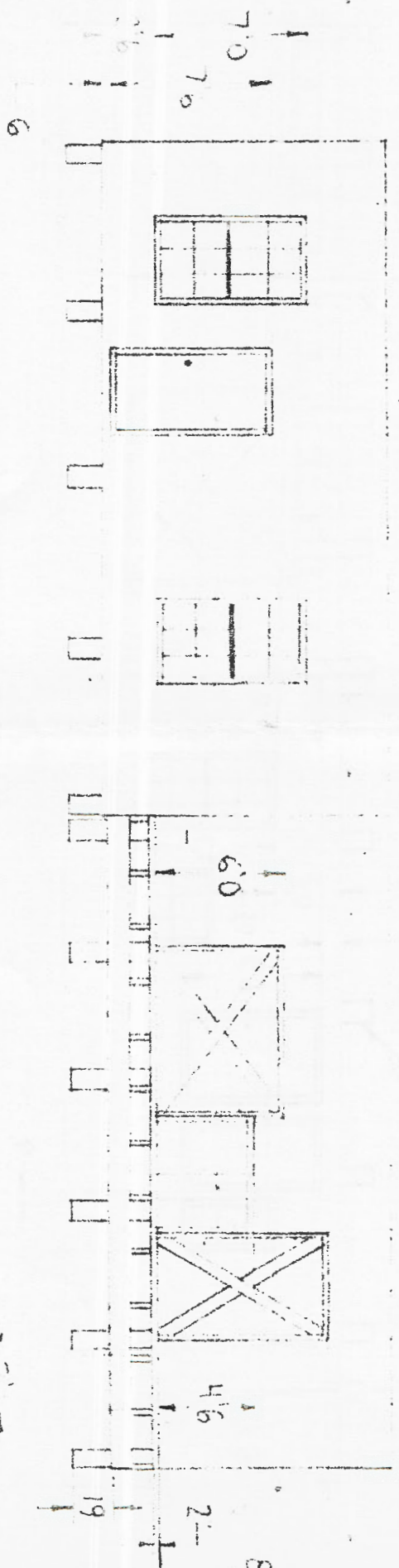
REAR VIEW

1/8" SCALE

STRUCTURE PLANS

21'0"
 9'6" - 4'0" -
 3'6" - 4'0"

4'0" -
 6'0" - 9'0" - 5'6" -
 5'0"



ALL TRIM 3 WIDE

FRONT VIEW

1/8" SCALE

Legend

ms - Vertical Separation
↑ - Points of Interest
□ - Elevation

PONTOOSUC DIVISION OF THE PECATONICA & PONTOOSUC RAILROAD
(The author takes you on a fan trip over his pike)

Our trip begins in Pontoosuc, the southernmost point on the P&P R.R. Pontoosuc is located in Hancock county, Illinois on the border of the Mississippi River. This small metropolis has a population of but 210 people. Thus this small but very well kept town (except for that darn eyesore--the railroad) is destined to handle the barge traffic on the mighty Mississippi and an occasional steamer which stops twice a week.

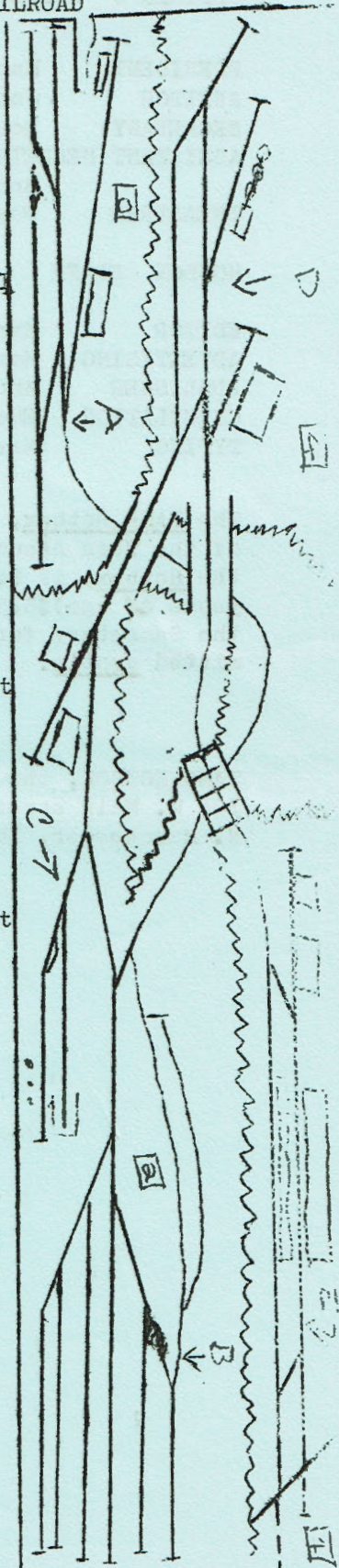
Now you are invited on a fan trip with me over the line. As you step off the steamer, you are greeted by the conductor of train #6, a Limited heading for Pontoosuc station. You are quickly ushered aboard the 60' heavy-weight steel coach which is used only on this part of the line because of sharp curves and steep grades. As you are waiting for the rest of the passengers to be seated your eyes begin to wander about the dock area itself (point A) which is quite unique. The area surrounding the dock is quite small due to steep hills on 3 sides leaving only an opening at the waterfront and a cut into which the tracks disappear.

Your engine #1715, a GP9 (now scrapped) in CN&W paint because of leasing is coupling onto the coach. The conductor shouts the familiar "All aboard" and your off. You now proceed cautiously thru the dock switchwork and onto a 3.5% grade which leads into a cut which in turn is transversed by three bridges. As you come out from under the last bridge you emerge in the dock yard. The conductor announces that there will be a brief stoppage in the yard while the engine refuels. Also, to the delight of the passengers, he announces that during that time a tour of both the yard and engine ready tracks (Points B&C) will be conducted.

The yardmaster himself conducts the yard and in the process explains that the yard was built because of the small amount of room at the dock and that it's 5 tracks are capable of holding 22 cars. He also points out that the dock requires several trains a day and in the height of the harvesting, the yard becomes a little too crowded for comfort. At the engine ready tracks, he explains the facilities are capable of handling four engines and for providing minor repairs.

The conductor informs you that it is time to go and that he has a schedule to keep. After reboarding the train, you slowly pull out of the dockyard, past the engine ready tracks and up an incline to 3 bridges (Point D). Over the PA, the conductor announces that this is Pontoosuc's major industrial area providing processing & storage.

The engineer makes a runaround movement and you are on your way to the station (Point E). As you arrive the ticket agent announces over the station PA "Train #16 to Terre Haute & points beyond now boarding on platform one" You now board this train bound for a fan trip over the next division of the P&P R.R.



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