The S Resource

NEWS, REVIEWS, INFORMATION TO USE

August/September 2015
Vol. 1 # 6

S Scale

Resin Kits Pt 3
Using Mock Ups
Jim's Hopper Car
Chuck West's Layout
Tony Dixon's Module
Illinois Central Interlocking Tower
And Much More…

Bill Of Lading

Published Bi Monthly

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August/September 2015
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Welcome to the online S Scale Resource magazine. The magazine is presented in an easy to use format. The blue bar above the magazine has commands for previewing all the pages, advancing the pages forward or back, searching to go to a specific page, enlarging pages, printing pages, enlarging the view to full screen, and downloading a copy to your computer

Front Cover Photo

A scene on Chuck West's layout. The factory in the background looks busy with the siding full of tank cars.

Rear Cover Photo

An American Models GP-9 spots a car on Chuck West's layout

Advertisers Index

The Model Railroad Resource LLC publishes *The O Scale Resource* also.
Be sure to take a look. There are many articles in our magazines that are not scale specific, and will be of interest to you. Click this announcement to see the magazine online.

DES PLAINES HOBBIES

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Caboose body kits have laser cut bodies made from aircraft grade plywood. They are stable and will not warp. All caboose models were designed using railroad drawings. All kits include interior partitions and benches that match the prototype. The window sash in the car bodies will operate. The frames are a brass etching that can be soldered together.

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SSA67 Canadian National
SSA68 GN 30' Tongue and Groove Siding
SSA69 GN 30' Plywood Siding
SSA70 B&O I-10 coming real soon

CB&Q 30' caboose body shown as an example

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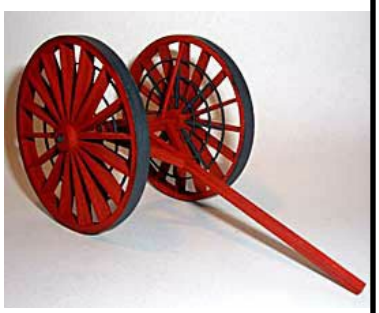
301002 NYC Crossing Watchman's Shelter
301004 NYC&StL Out House

SOO Line Out House. Details Not Included

Accessory Kits

302002 Billboard Sign
302003 Logging Big Wheels

Billboard Kit



Logging Big Wheels

Des Plaines Hobbies 1524 Lee St. Des Plaines, Illinois 60018
www.desplaineshobbies.com
Phone 847-297-2118

Editorial Comment

August is here, and that means NASG S Scale National convention. You still have time to get there. Once winter comes and you are snowed in, you will be looking for something to do. Now is the time to stock up on kits and supplies, and the S Scale National is a great place to do just that. I hope to see you there.

In this issue, we visit Chuck West and see his layout. This visit is what it's all about in the model railroad hobby. Through the hobby, Chuck acquired a whole new circle of friends, and they all get together on a regular basis now. Take a look at some of the fun they are having in "Chuck West's Layout". In the April/May 2015 issue of *The S Scale Resource*, we took a look at resin kits. Jim Kindraka and I have been getting together building models and started on some resin kits together. The first article was about resin kits in general and what to expect when you get one. After that article, I did an article in the June/July 2015 issue showing how I was adding some details to my kit and how I painted it. In this issue, I finish the car and do a bit of quick weathering. The technique is quick and the car will blend in nicely with other cars. Take a look at "Resin Kits Pt. 3". Jim is back with some photos of the covered hoppers he was working on. He added some extra details made out of strip styrene. They look good on the model, and the extra detail is visible on the S Scale model. Take a look at what he did in "Jim's Hopper Car". In the December 2014/January 2015 issue, we took a prototype look at grain elevators. Tony Dixon, from Lincoln, Iowa, sent me some photos of a module he is building. There is a big following in farm theme modeling and a lot of manufacturers supply this market. The good news for us is that the scale is 3/16" to the foot. They are making a lot of vehicles and buildings that we can use on our layouts. Tony built a module in 3/16" to the foot with some scratch built, as well as, kit bashed structures. The module shows a grain storage complex as it evolved from the original wood bins to all the modern additions and buildings. Besides the buildings, Tony likes to kit bash and scratch build all the farm equipment and vehicles. There is even a tractor pull on the module. The tracks are not in yet, but they are coming. Take a look "Tony Dixon's Module" to see his work so far. When working on our layouts it is hard to visualize what a scene will look like. A lot of time this results in taking it all out after it is done and doing it over. In the December 2014/January 2015 issue of the S Scale Resource, we saw how Larry Blank used some mock ups of his buildings. In this issue, Mark Charles shows us how he uses mock ups to see how buildings will fit his scene before he builds them. See what Mark does in "Using Mock Ups". Lastly, I have some prototype plans for you. In Ashkum, Illinois, the old Illinois Central interlocking tower is still there. There is some interesting brick work that would look good on a model. Look the article over and see if it gives you any ideas.

That does it for this issue. See you at the national in Kansas City!

Glenn Guerra

News And Reviews

The S Scale Resource will be at the S Scale National Convention in Kansas City on August 8th. Hope to see you there!

Steve Wolcott from Pre-Size dropped us a note to say they are now offering free shipping on orders over $25 in the continental US . This is welcome news to people who have no hobby store nearby.

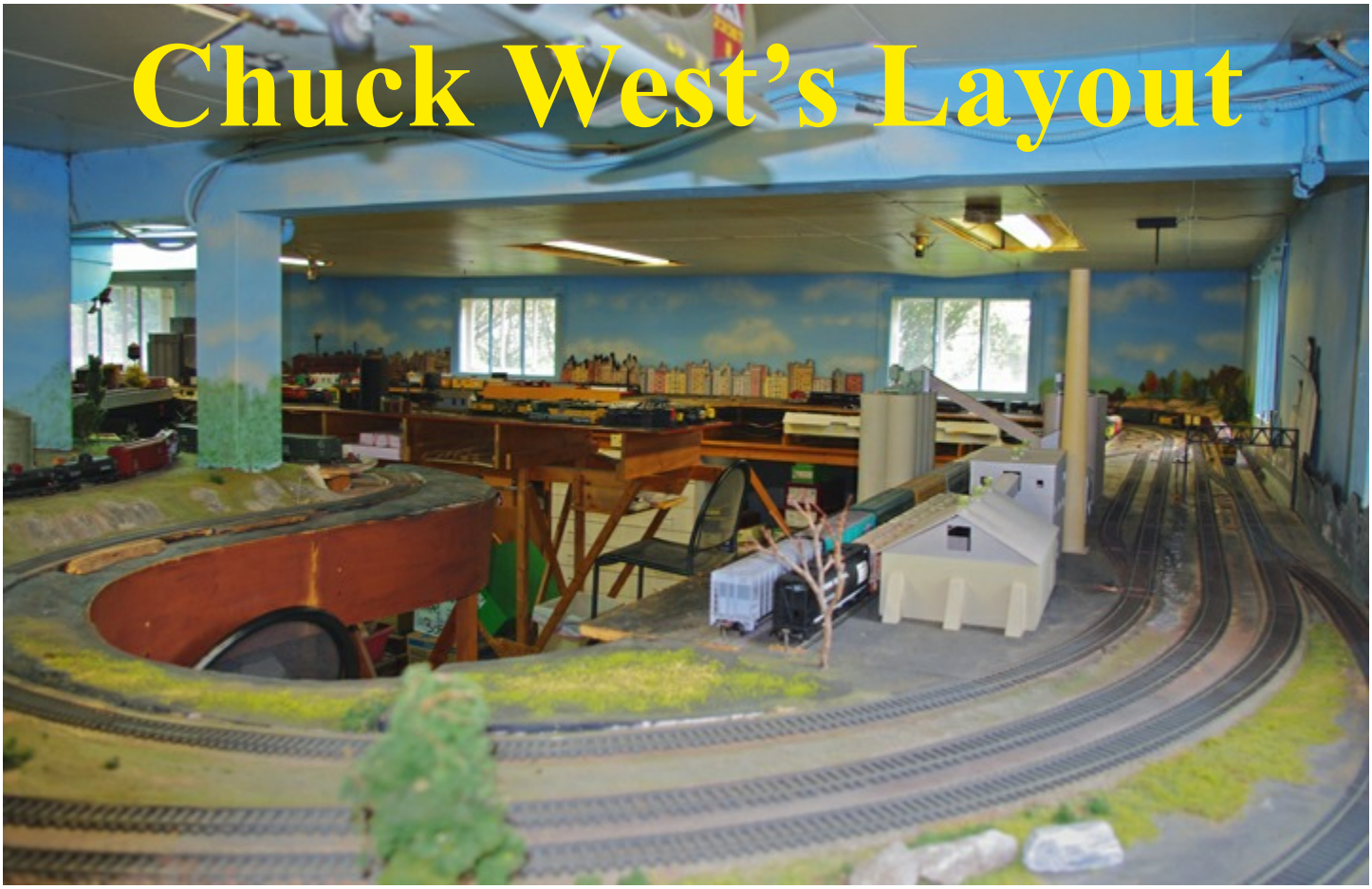
Shawn Cavaretta of MinuteMan Scale Models has acquired the Scalecoat line of paint from Weaver Models. Shawn is in the process of moving, and tells us that the paints will be available around the first week of August. He also said he is planning on adding new colors and flat paints. The flat colors will allow you to paint your models and have a matte finish instead of a high gloss finish. Sounds like good news for people who use Scalecoat paint.

I talked to Mark Meeks at Union Station Products and he was telling me about some new cars he just finished the drawings for. In 1944, ACF built 50 streamline hospital cars for the US Army. The Southern Pacific bought five and made dormitory baggage cars out of them. Mark will be offering four versions of the sides of these cars. He will offer the original US Army version and three different versions used on the Southern Pacific. Check his website if you are interested.

During World War II, aluminum production increased dramatically, and after the war, aluminum manufacturers were looking for new markets for aluminum. Both Alcoa and Reynolds went to rail car manufacturers and helped design light weight aluminum cars. They were left in the natural aluminum state and were just lettered. Des Plaines Hobbies has released lettering sets for two different railroads as shown above. See there website under S Scale decals for more information.

Bob Hogan sent us a photo of his recently completed East West Rail Services Chesapeake and Ohio 36’ Stockcar kit. Bob said “this was a very pleasant building experience and a craftsman type kit that I recommend to everyone, experienced or a modeler just starting out on such kits”. This sounds like a good model you may want to take a look at. See the East West Rail Service website.

Chuck West's Layout



An overview of Chuck's layout, and what you first see when you enter the room.

By Glenn Guerra

Chuck West lives and works in Des Plaines, Illinois and has an S Scale layout. So what's the big deal? Well, Chuck has more than a layout, he has acquired a great group of friends, and has had a lot of good times with his layout and friends. I went to see Chuck and his layout recently so I could show you what is there.

Chuck started with an HO Scale layout and was like many of us, just doing his own thing. While he had the HO Scale layout, he bought a few O Scale models for display. The larger size was appealing. As time went on, Chuck started looking at the HO Scale layout and felt the size of the models was just too small so he started planning a new layout in O Scale. Realizing that the larger size would limit what he could do with the space available, he resigned himself to the fact that he would have a switching layout. There would be no 50' or larger cars like passenger cars and few, if any, large locomotives. The next step was to buy a few pieces of track and start mocking things up. Accommodating the radius of curves he wanted would take a lot of space in O Scale – it was beginning to look like it just would not work. Then an inspiration came.

Chuck lives a few blocks from Des Plaines Hobbies, and they carry a lot of S Scale equipment. One day Chuck was looking at some S Scale models built by Phil Valenzo that were on display at the hobby store. He liked the larger size and the detail that could be put into the models so he bought a few to try it out. Chuck said one of the first models he bought was an undecorated American Models GP-9. The Chicago and Northwestern is the hometown railroad, so he painted it and used some Des Plaines Hobbies decals to letter it. Well, as a fisherman would say "the hook was set".

Some of the models at Chuck's layout. Some of these belong to the guys who come over, and some belong to Chuck. There are a lot of good models available in S Scale and the modeler should be able to find something that fits his era or interest.

A view of Chucks 'layout. The white cabinet under the bench work was supplied by Alan Zielinski so people could leave equipment at Chuck's house. This saves all the handling of the equipment and minimizes damage.

This view shows some of the diesel models on Chuck's layout. That's Sam McCoy sitting at the work bench in the upper left corner. The new switching section of the layout is behind him.

A Norfolk and Western Y-3b pulls up to the water tank. If you are asking yourself who made that in S Scale, the answer is no one. Well, not exactly, it's a Lionel high rail only model that Alan Zielinski had converted to scale wheels by Fred Rouse. The model is lettered for Union Pacific which seems out of place, but during World War II, the war production board had the Norfolk and Western send some excess engines to other railroads to relieve motive power shortages. The Union Pacific ran some of these Y-3b locomotives for a while.

A Chicago and Northwestern GP-9 switches a small industry. This was Chuck's first S Scale engine and is an American Models undecorated unit that Chuck painted and lettered.

These are some of the steam engines on Chuck's layout. The articulated engine is a Lionel Norfolk and Western Y-3b that was converted to scale wheels by Alan Zielinski.

Chuck started to take up the HO Scale layout and sell it. Using the same bench work, he started to build an S Scale layout sometime around 2004. The S Scale layout was a single track with a passing siding and a few other sidings. Soon after this Chuck met Sam McCoy through the hobby store. I met Sam through Ted Schepf while working on Ted's O Scale layout around 1990. At that time, Sam was modeling in O Scale and soon after started in S Scale. Sam always has ideas, and it wasn't long before Sam talked Chuck into making a double track railroad so they could run more trains. Soon there were more changes.

Chuck started to meet more local S Scale modelers through the hobby store, and he and Sam were getting together on a regular basis on Saturday nights. Around this same time, Jim Kindraka took a job in Wisconsin and moved to Plymouth, Wisconsin. He would frequent Des Plaines Hobbies and met Sam. Soon, he too, was a regular on Saturday nights at Chuck's house, along with other people. An informal group was forming.

Sam McCoy built this curved turnout. He started with an HO Scale code 100 turnout and removed the rail from the ties. Then, he spiked it to S Scale on a curve. He did not need to file points or make any frogs. I thought this was a clever idea.

Sam talked Chuck into a new switching section behind the work bench, and that was built. Chuck said not only is it a lot of fun to switch, and it has added to the layout. Speaking of the work bench, Chuck told me that every Saturday there are one or two guys working on models at the bench while others are running trains.

Another modeler who showed up was Alan Zielinski, a high rail American Flyer collector. Alan has a high rail layout at home and has a few scale models as well. Alan runs his scale models at Chuck's house. By now, many of the guys were leaving equipment at Chuck's house and track space was getting to be a problem. Two things changed that. Since we are talking about Alan in this paragraph, let's look at his contribution. Alan has a cabinet company so he had a set of storage drawers built. He showed up one day with the drawers, and now there is storage space off the layout. There was more though.

Sam, whose list of ideas has no end, suggested that Chuck build a hidden storage yard under the layout. Chuck was dead set against this for a few reasons. The first is, he does not like grades and it would require a grade to get into the storage yard. Next, he does not like tight radius curves and one would be required to enter the new yard. Finally, hidden tracks can be a lot of trouble when there is a problems. Sam persisted, and there is now a storage yard. Chuck said it works fine for what they do. He said they don't use it for part of the operation, just storage, so it sees limited use and that works. To make this work and fit in the existing space, Sam had to make a curved turnout. I thought what he did was clever. Sam bought a code 100 HO Scale turnout, took it apart, and re-spiked it to S Scale making it curved. It worked well, and he did not need to make a frog or points.

Some of the regular group playing with their trains on a Saturday night at Chuck's house.

The layout started as straight DC, and that was fine for Chuck. One day at the hobby store they were showing Chuck how DCC and sound worked. It was a lot to resist. Enter Sam again. He simply said "This is easy, watch this", and now the layout has been converted to DCC. Sam showed Chuck how to install the decoders, and Chuck said Sam is the "go to" guy when there are problems. Chuck is very happy with the way it works.

While I was there, Chuck had a few trains running and it occurred to me that there was no clickity clack on any of the track. The layout is very smooth and operated flawlessly. This is a testament to spending time on track work. The curves on the main line are over a 48" radius and that will allow any engine or car to run. The track is a combination of Tomalco and Shinohara track and switches with some hand laid sections and switches.

So, what started as a one man adventure into S Scale, has grown into a regular Saturday night train meeting and general good time. Every now and then they get motivated and work on the layout, but most of the time they just run trains, fiddle at the work bench, or gab. Does it get much better that that?

Using Mock-Ups

When Planning Structures for Your Layout

By Mark Charles

When building or changing a layout, two big questions are: will it fit, and, how will it look? I am modeling the Lehigh Valley railroad and there are few comercial structures that will work. As a result, I will need to scratch build or kit bash many of the buildings on my layout.

Whether or not you've finalized the location of tracks, it's handy to get a sense of whether the structures you've planned for your layout will fit, and how they will look 'in place'. I think best when seeing things full size in three dimensions, so I've devised a process to quickly build mock-ups. This way, I can make changes if needed before investing time in assembling a kit or scratch-building.

Usually before starting serious work on a structure, I make a mock-up using foam core. Foam core is available at craft stores and office supply outlets. It has two faces of cardstock sandwiched togehter with a core of styrofoam. It cuts easily with a hobby knife and can be taped together or glued with white glue. Best of all, it is very low cost. If my knife slips or some other mishap occurs, I throw that piece in the trash and start another.

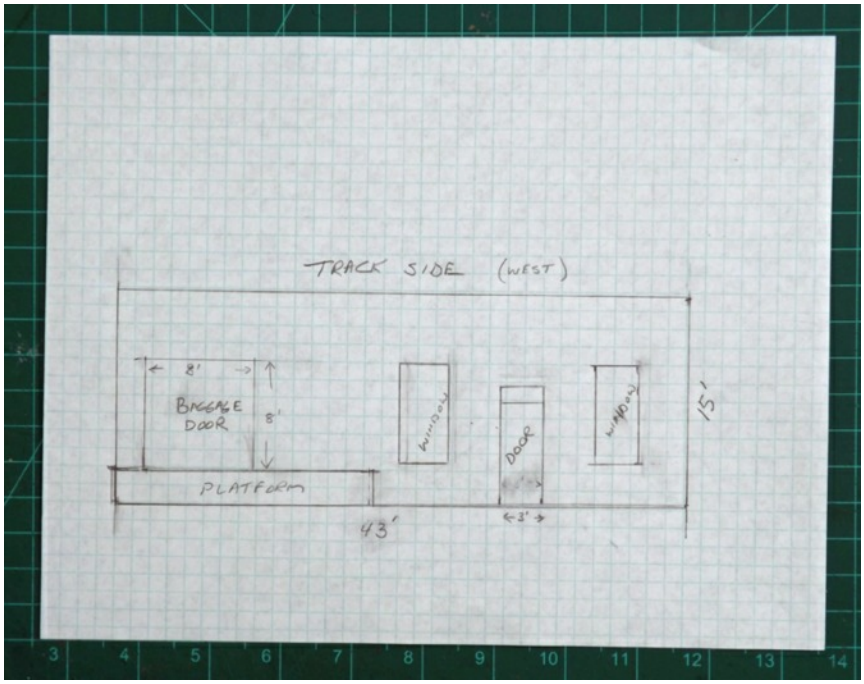
When I'm planning to modify a kit, I simply trace around the kit's walls and floor on foamcore, then cutout the pieces. Depending on the way the kit's walls are intended to join, you may need to remove a thin vertical strip of width equal to the thickness of the foamcore you are using. Once that is done, I can modify the size or shape of the kit to see how it will look or fit my location. By doing this, I am able to modify the kit and see how it will look before I cut the kit. This also gives me a chance to look at where I would need to cut the kit walls or other parts.

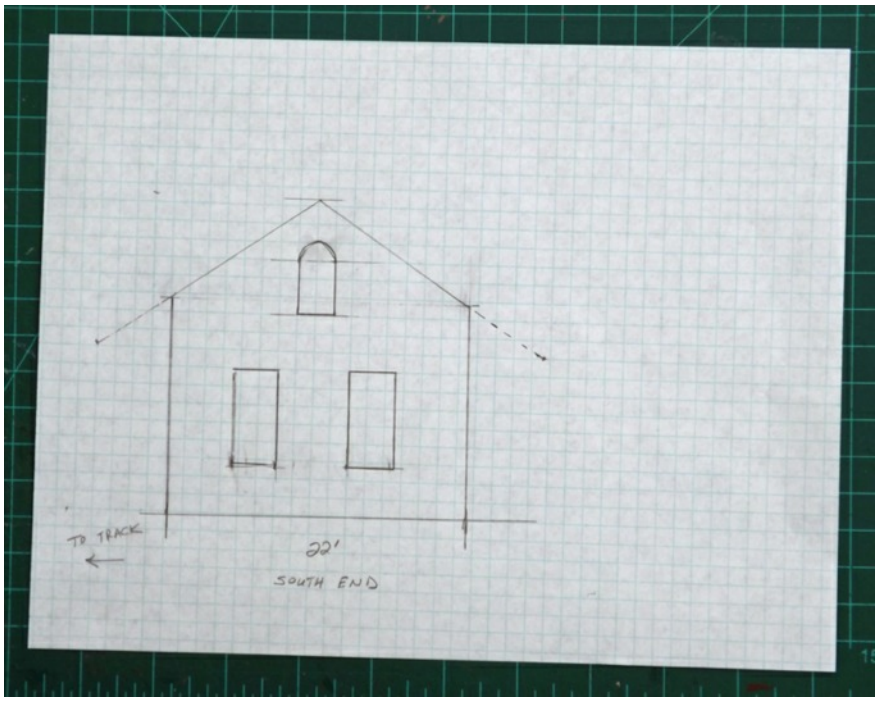
Mark found this postcard view of the Lehigh Valley depot and wanted to make a model for his layout. He needed to see how it would fit and how big it would be, so he built a mock up first.

When scratchbuilding, I make drawings first. To make any building you need drawings anyway, so this is not a wasted step. If you have drawings from a magazine, you can make copies or scans to full size S Scale. If not, you will need to draw your building. When drawing your building, concentrate on the location of doors and windows first. I use laser cut doors and windows from Rusty Stumps or styrene ones from Tichy or Grandt Line. Take their size into account and draw them on your plan to the correct size. Once the door and window locations are known, you can sketch in some siding details if you want. Then, I make a copy of the drawings in 1/64 scale and glue that directly to the foamcore. When that is done, I cut through both at once. There are computer programs now that will make brick or siding details and you could use printed sheets of these patterns on your foam core mock up to better help you visualize what the building will look like.

The photos show a model where I started with a photograph and estimated dimensions. You can use some dimensions of parts in a photo for reference. For example, a standard brick is 2-3/4" high by 8" long. By counting bricks, you can get a rough idea of the size of the building you want to model. Door openings are from 30" wide to 36" wide. These dimensions will give you a rough scale for the photo you are working from.

Mark used his mock up to see how his depot would fit his space. In the case of a depot, you need to consider how big the roof overhang will be, the platform size, and how the public will get to the depot.





These two photos show some of the sketches Mark made to determine the size of his depot.

For my depot I made drawings first and then laid out the dimensions directly on the foam core. I did not care about the window or door locations at this time, so I left the locations off of the foam core building. I then cut and assembled the walls. Usually I cut a floor to fit inside the walls to add structural strength. You can glue blocks of wood on the inside also. In this case, I made the roof from cardstock (probably a shirt cardboard).

The model in the photos represents a depot in Dryden, NY, on the Auburn Division of the Lehigh Valley RR. The depot was on the east side of the tracks, with the passenger area at the south end. (Note that the postcard shows a mirror-image depot nearby. That depot was on the west side of the tracks, but with the passenger area at the south end.)

If you started with scale drawings, they probably show window and door details. Since I started from dimensions, the plain-jane white foamcore was adequate for general size and shape, but I wanted something that was a little more realistic. For this, I used a software program called Model Builder, from Evan Designs. You could do something similar in Inkscape (a free drawing program), Sketch-Up, CorelDraw, or whatever software you prefer. Model Builder includes re-sizeable window and door templates, board-and-bat texture, and scale rulers. This speeds up the process of creating a drawing.

Any changes I want to make are easy to do in the foam core. When making a structure for the layout, there is more to the scene and that will all be affected by the size of the structure. In this example of the depot, the building has large overhangs. These affect how close to the track you put the building. In addition, you need a platform and a way for the public to get to the depot. All these things start to become clearer when you make a mock up.

Now I am confident this depot model will fit in the space I've planned for it. When I start building this structure in basswood or styrene, I will print another copy and use my Model Builder drawings as a full sized template, but yhat's a story for another day.

Tony Dixon's Module

By Glenn Guerra

In the December, 2014 issue of *The S Scale Resource*, we took a look at grain elevators. We looked at some of the different types, and how a complex looks with different eras of elevators. Tony Dixon of Lincoln, Iowa sent us some photos of a farm coop module he is working on. The module is built in S Scale using a variety of commercial components and scratch built components. You will notice a lot of vehicles on the module. Tony likes to kit bash and scratch build trucking and farm equipment. The primary purpose of the module right now is to display his vehicles. In Tony's correspondence, he had this to say:

> "The display has a truck and tractor pulling track and the coop so far; my overall display will go around 3 walls in the room and stick out 3' from each wall, the room is 11' × 15'. My tentative plan on paper for the rest of the display is to have a spur running down the opposite wall, across the 11' wall crossing the road and traveling along the platform side of the wood house before terminating at the wall. If I can allocate more room in the basement, it will all be tied into a larger switching layout, but I am currently limited and have set plans on field and farm to display my custom, scratch built and kit bash farm equipment and trucks."

One of the sources Tony used is Standi farm toys. If you do a search on the web for Standi Farm Toys, you will come up with a lot of dealers who sell the products. They make many items found on farms and around grain elevators and it is all in 1/64th size. Another source Tony used was Tractorfab. They make many items in 1/64th size for detailing your farm and grain elevator scenes. Ertl also makes 1/64th farm and grain storage toys. These products are not normally advertised in model train publications, but are good sources for 1/64th scale items.

This article is not a how-to type of article, but more of an idea of what is available and what can be done. As you look at the photos, pay attention to all the vehicles and farm equipment. Tony kit bashed or scratch built almost all of these.

The bins and overhead are Standi, with the safety cage and ladder on the bin to the right being Tractorfab components. The truck and trailer are modified pieces from Diecast Promotions (DCP).

Tony scratch built the concrete silo complex using 3" PVC drain pipe and styrene. Here, he has just finished the basic model and sprayed it. The model was installed on the module, and details will be added as time goes on.

Tony scratch built the older wood grain bins out of styrene, and they are roughly based on a structure that was used for a feed mill in Dinsdale Iowa. The modern addition is a kit bash using the same building model as the blue and white building seen on the module. The use of an old style building with a modern addition adds a lot of life to a scene. It also shows how you can use structures from an older era on a contemporary era layout.

This view shows the grain bins from Standi on the left. Tony cut one of the larger ones in half to mount against the wall. This is a good idea to save space. The small shiny bin next to the blue and white building is from Ertl, as is the building.

The blue and white building is a commercially available building from Ertl. Tony did a nice job of combining kits and parts from various manufacturers.

Resin Kits Part 3

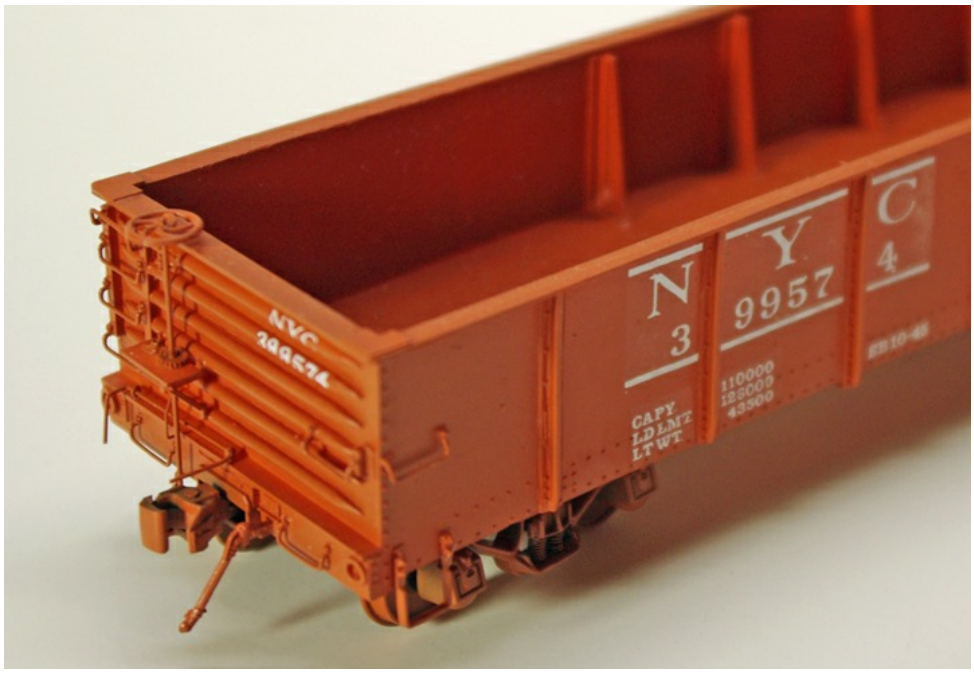
By Glenn Guerra

In the April-May 2015 issue of *The S Scale Resource*, Jim Kindraka and I were taking a look at resin kits. I was building a New York Central gondola. In the June-July issue, I talked a bit about some of the details I added to the model and how they were done. I also talked about painting the model in that issue. I wanted to weather the finished model, and in this issue, I have applied the decals and finished the car.

The decals that came with the kit were printed on high gloss film and were rather thick. I like to paint my models with Floquil paint and it usually comes out a semi gloss for me. When I use decals that are printed on a matte finish film and that are thinner, I don't have a lot of trouble with hiding the film. In this case, the high gloss of the film stood out a little too much. To hide some of that, I gave the car a light coat of clear lacquer over the decals when they were dry. I just used a spray can of some lacquer I found at the hardware store. Once that was done, I moved on to some weathering.

The finished car after decals have been applied. From this view, you cannot see the difference in gloss between the decal and the car paint.

In this view of the car with decals applied, you can see some of the difference in the gloss of the decal and the car paint. Look closely at the C in the reporting marks. When I over sprayed the car with some gloss lacquer, it hid the distinction between the decal and the paint.



I wanted the car to look used, but not abused. Before chalk powders and acrylic paint, I would weather with very dilute paint in the air brush. I would use thinner to clean the jar for my air brush and would save it for the next job. I noticed when I shook up the jar of thinner it looked opaque but when it settled it was clear. There was very little pigment, and it all settled out. It was a nice dirty color, so I sprayed some on a model to see what would happen. When it went on it was clear and you could not see it. However, when it dried, it was flat and you could see it had toned down the paint. It made the model look dusty or dirty. I used the technique quite a bit. Sometimes I would mix special colors depending on the service the car was in and the general area where it may have run. For cars that ran in the west, I liked to use a tan color because it matched the soil color better. For this car, I used some grimy black because these cars spend a lot of time in foundries and scrap yards.

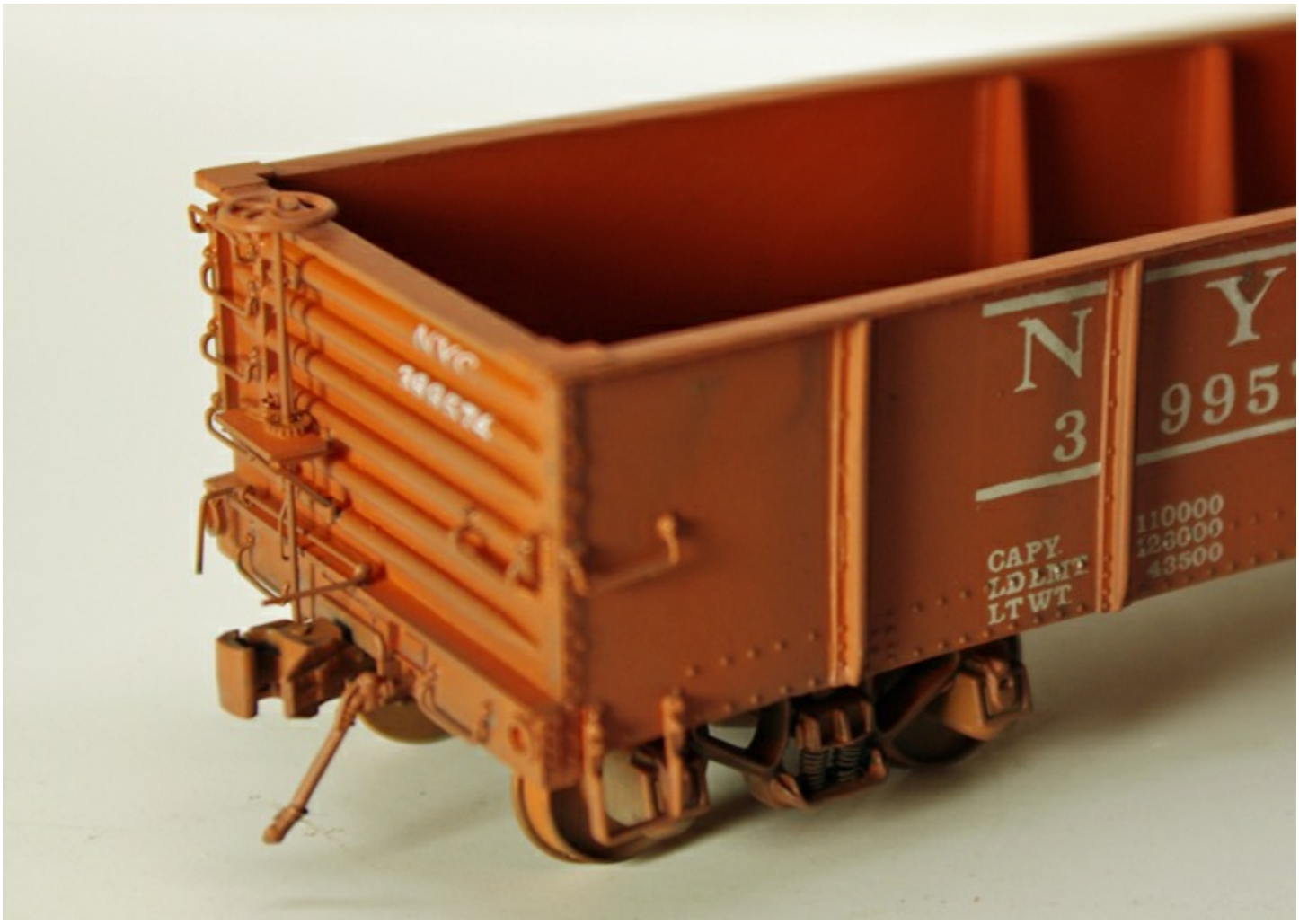
The gondola model ready to weather. There is still a hint of the decal film, but the weathering will hide that.

I set the model on a block of wood in my paint booth so I could turn it and spray it from the side. I mixed up some paint with a lot of thinner. I used about a quarter of a jar of thinner and a few drops of paint. I actually used a bit too much paint. As I was spraying I could see where I was painting. That is an indication that the paint mix is too strong. I have had the best results when it looks clear going on. I like to concentrate on places where dirt would collect. Usually, I will start by spraying the running gear and bottom edge or the car. I also like to hit the ribs on the side. My air brush is double acting and I can vary the amount of paint by how far I pull back on the trigger. This allows for a very fine and narrow pattern. You need to be careful that you don't have the pressure too high. When making a fine line with the air brush, you need to get close to the model. If your pressure is too high it will blow your paint away from where you want it. Take a look at my model on the two ribs just above the air tank. I wanted the paint on the rib, but it blew away because I had the air pressure up too high.

The model right after spraying. I concentrated on the running gear and the side braces because that is where dirt would accumulate.

I sprayed the interior of the car the same way. Dirt would collect in the corners and around the interior braces on the car, so that is where I sprayed. It almost looks like shadows. Since the paint mix is very thin, don't keep putting it on until you see it. Spray it once lightly and let it sit for a while. Then come back and do more. You will be adding light coats of paint a little at a time just like the way the dirt would accumulate. For other effects, change your color mix a little with each coat.

On the interior of the gondola I concentrated on areas where dirt would collect. I made a few applications of the weathering, and did not try to do it all at once.



The finished car looks good, and I have hidden the decal film. The only thing left to do is the paint off of the wheels.

Once I had the car weathered, there was one last thing to do. I like to take the paint off the wheels because it just messes up the track. The other thing I like to do is to polish the wheels. I do this with the motor tool and a the gray rubber abrasive disc made for it. I run the disc on the wheel and drag the axle with my finger. The disc will take all the paint off polishing the wheel, making for a nice effect.

The next time you are looking at the jar of thinner you clean your air brush with, take a second look. You can use it to tone down the paint job on your cars and provide a slight bit of weathering. Make sure your mix is very thin and turn the air pressure down. It's a quick and cheap way to lightly weather your cars. A very light job that you can hardly see will take the new look off of your cars, and when they are all together, it will make them look used.

The finished car with the polished wheels. I like the look of the clean wheels on the model.

Jim's Hopper Car

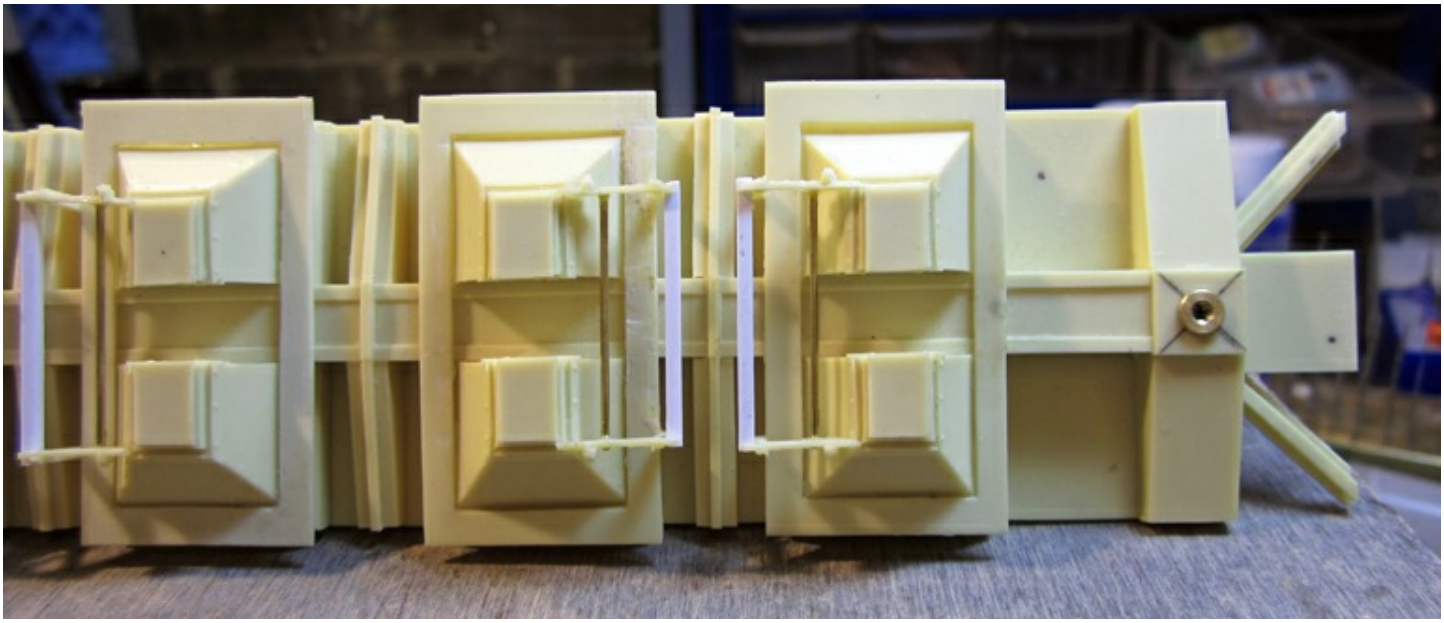
Jim Kindraka's nearly finished hopper car. This model started as a resin kit that Jim added some extra detail to.

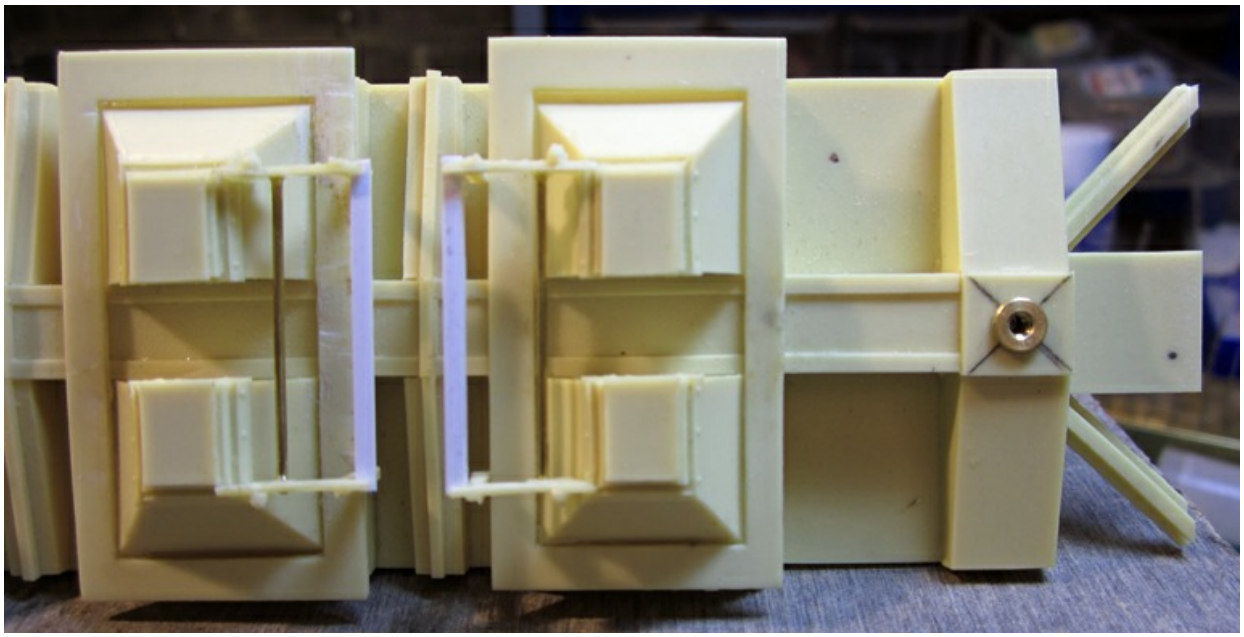
By Glenn Guerra

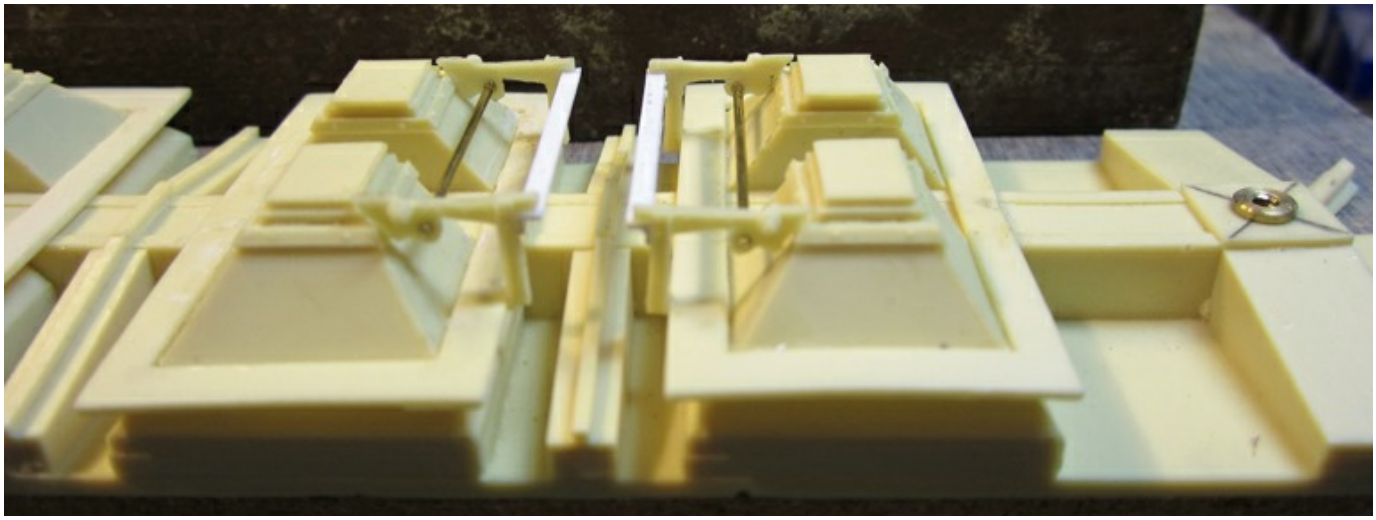
In the last two issues of *The S Scale Resource*, we have been talking about resin kits. This all got started while Jim Kindraka and I were doing some modeling some resin kits together. I was working on a gondola model and finished it with an article in this issue. Jim was working on two different covered hopper cars and this article will show how he finished them. One car was a two bay short heavy commodity car, and the other was a three bay car for lighter commodities like grain.

As we were working on the models, we were looking at photos of the prototype cars. Jim acquired some photos from the New York Central Historical Society. He noticed that the discharge doors had some braces and supports around them that were not part of the kit. So, he looked in the styrene shapes box I have to see what he could find. Around nine years ago I was making some patterns for casting resin parts and was using styrene. After the second trip to the store for styrene, at that time around $2 a bag, I started thinking this was a dumb idea. Styrene is cheap. Trips to the store cost more than the bag of styrene, so I bought one of all the sizes and shapes I thought I would use. Now, when I am working on a model, I don't need to stop and wait until the next time I go to the hobby store. Trust me, it improves your attitude towards your models a lot when you have materials on hand, and it is not that expensive to have extra.

Let's get back to Jim. He was digging around in the box and found some shapes that would work. One of the nice things about resin kits is that they are compatible with styrene when gluing parts together. When Jim finished gluing the car body for the three bay car together he fitted the floor piece to the body, but did not glue it in. He removed the floor and started working on the discharge chutes. Having the floor out made it easier to

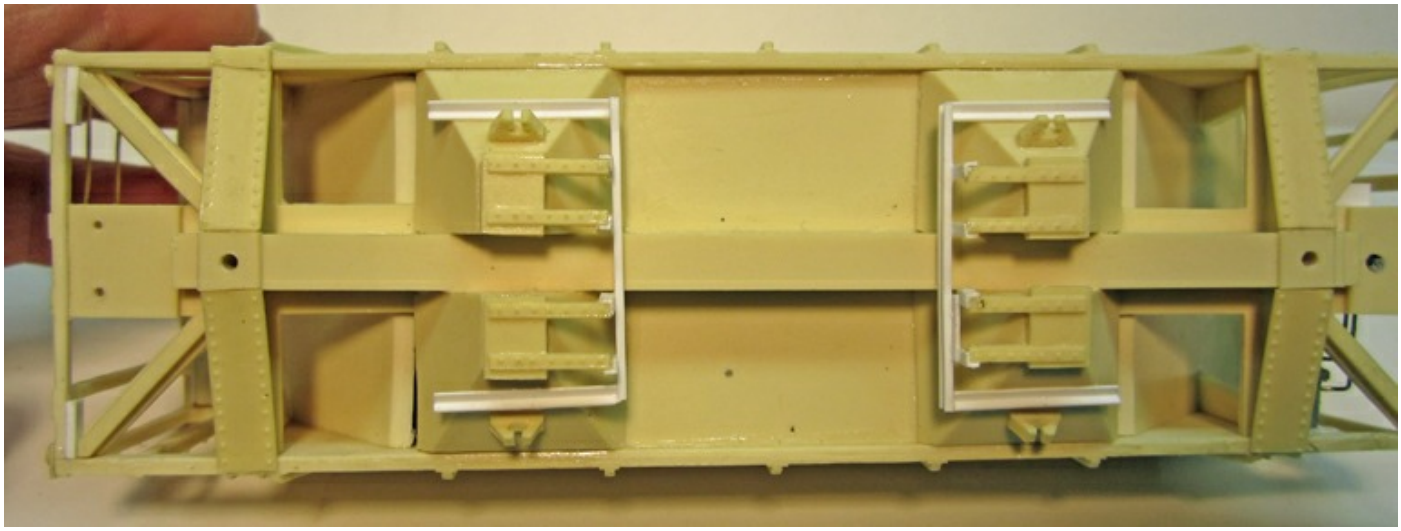






These three photos show the first piece Jim added to the three bay hopper kit he was working on. The new styrene angle is the white part in the photos.

work on the discharge chutes and hold the floor at the same time. The first thing he added was a piece of 1/16” angle between the discharge door operating mechanism arms. This piece is on the prototype and it gives the pieces on the model a lot of strength. The angles were glued in place with ACC type glue after the resin arms were glued to the hoppers. You can see these pieces in the photos. Make sure that your resin parts are clean. Most of the manufacturers recommend cleaning with soap and water to remove all traces of mold release that may be on the model. If your part is not too delicate, sand or file the joint a little and this will take the smooth surface off of the resin part. This will help the glue get a better grip on the resin.



These photos show the two bay hopper Jim was working on. This kit did not have any of the discharge door supports in it, so Jim fabricated it all out of styrene.

Jim did the same thing to the two bay car, but used different styrene shapes. There was none of this detail in the kit. Jim first added the vertical pieces that would support the discharge door tracks. Once he had those in place, he was able to locate the styrene channel to the center sill and glue it in place. Then, Jim glued the vertical supports to the channel. The weight of the material inside the hopper has a tendency to bulge the sides of the hoppers a little, and this binds the discharge doors. You can see this as an angle on the side of the hopper in the builder’s photo just above the vibrator bracket. Again, Jim used 1/16” angle to make this piece.

The top view of the finished two bay hopper Jim was working on. The added wire for the lock mechanism is clearly visible on an S Scale model. It's easy to add, and fun to do.

The builder's photo of the car was supplied by the New York Central Historical Society. You can see the details that Jim wanted to put on his model. Additional photos of these cars are on the Canada Southern website. http://www.canadasouthern.com/caso/home.htm The Canada Southern had the same cars as these, and this site will give you some ideas for alternate lettering.

These types of details are easy to add to a resin kit and are fun to do. I would recommend the next time you are in the hobby store, spend around $30 and come home with a box full of common styrene shapes. Get some small angles and a variety of strips in .010", .015", and .020" thickness. That way, when you are sitting down to model, you will not be interrupted because of ten cents worth of styrene.

Jim went on to finish the roof details with some wire and paint the model. Is is all worth it? Well, compare the finished model at the start of this article with the prototype photo. S Scale is large enough that you can see these details. It adds a finished look to your models, and it's fun to do.

Illinois Central Interlocking Tower

By Glenn Guerra

The Illinois Central railroad main line south of Chicago was a busy place at one time. There was a lot of freight traffic and a parade of passenger trains. Some parts of the line around Kankakee, Illinois were a three track main line. The traffic was controlled by interlocking plants at the crossovers. Today, these are called control points on the railroad. At these control points, there was a tower that housed the interlocking machine and an operator. The interlocking machine controlled the switch points as well as the signals. The machine was designed so it was impossible to line the switches to cause a wreck. The operator had to know the right order to move the levers in the tower so the route he wanted would be lined up. This was all done manually.

There were square bars coming out of the base of the tower and these had arms bolted to them. As the bar was rotated by the interlocking machine, the arms pushed or pulled pipe that ran to the switches or signals. Some of these runs were very long. The pipe was carried on rollers so it was relatively easy to move. Relatively is the correct term, the levers that the tower operator pulled were up to 6 feet tall. The towers were made of wood or brick. This particular tower is at Ashkum, Illinois and still stands. The size and shape are common to most railroads. What I liked about this tower was the brick work. To build a model of this tower and include the brick patterns would really set off the model. I think you could build a styrene core and apply brick material over it. The thin material could be cut apart to get the pattern. I dimensioned the drawings with the prototype dimensions. For S Scale, convert the dimensions on the drawing to inches and divide by 64. The bricks on the prototype are 2-3/4" high X 8" long. The window and door placement will depend on the brick pattern material you decide to use along with the door and window units you use. As you can see from the photos, the steps are gone and the windows and doors are boarded up. I sketched up what I thought would work for the steps and they are in red. I searched other Illinois Central towers online and got ideas for how they looked. The magazine is in a pdf format which you can download or just down load the pages with the drawings. Feel free to do what you want with the drawings.

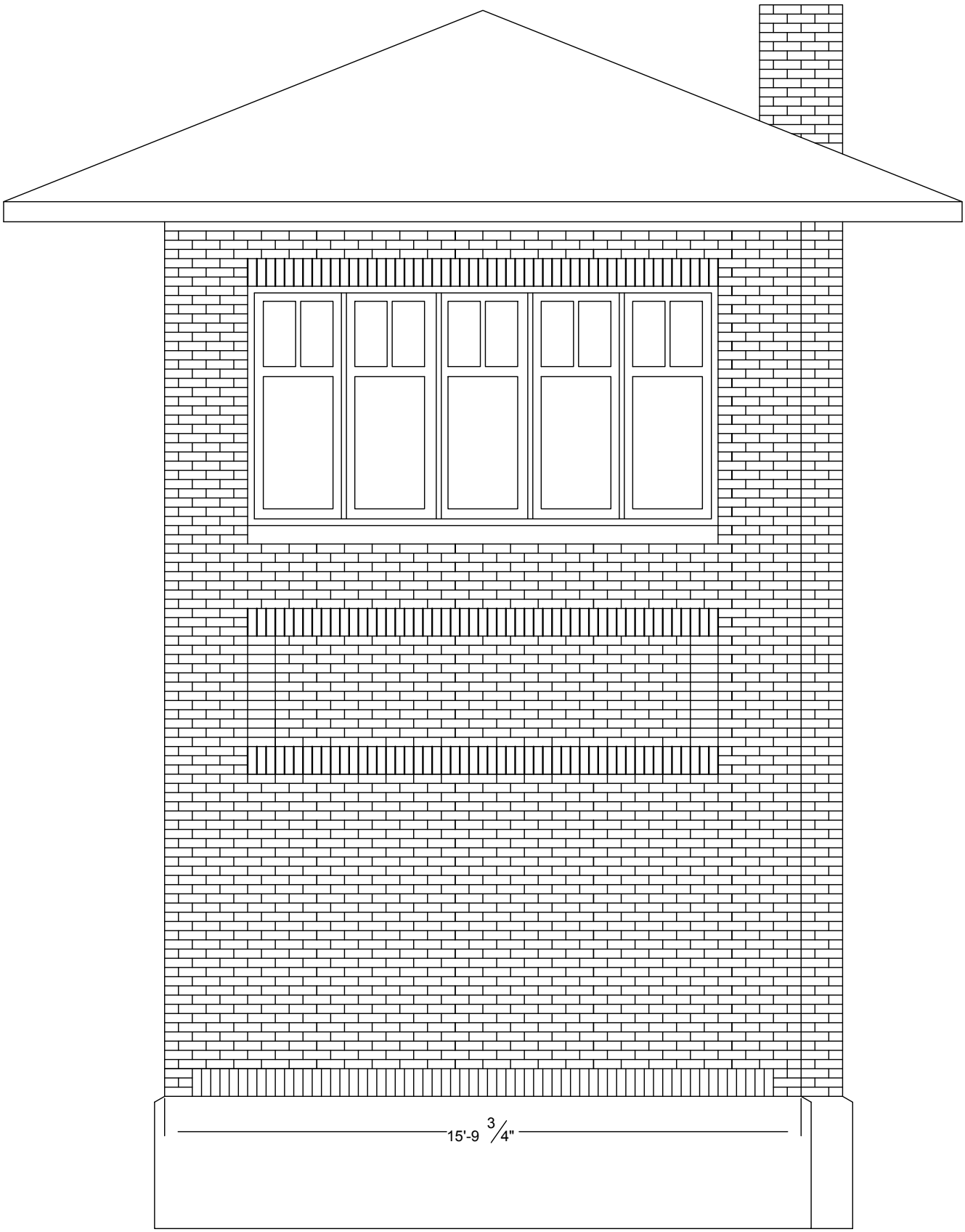
This is the track side view of the Illinois Central tower at Ashkum, Illinois. The concrete in the foreground supported the square bars that came out of the holes in the concrete foundation. There were arms bolted to the square bars. When the bars were rotated, the arms pulled and pushed on pipes that ran to the signals and switches. Note the brick pattern at the sill and the square pattern on the wall. These details would show off your model well.

This view is looking north towards Kankakee, Illinois. Note the brick work. This would be a nice feature to incorporate into a model. If you build a styrene core and used thin brick material, you could cut it and reassemble it into this pattern.

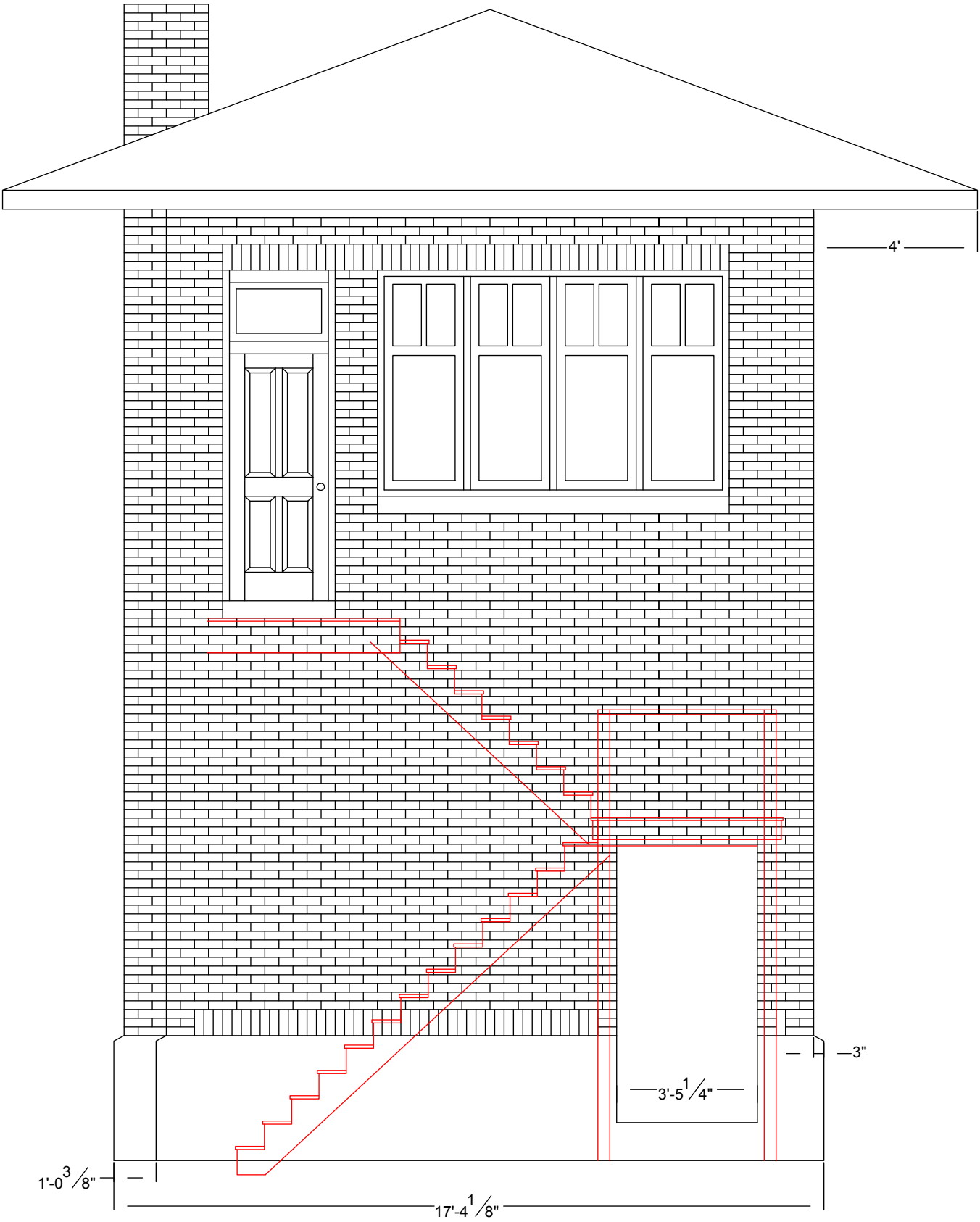
This view is looking south. The steps are gone and I could not get a clear idea of how they went. On some other photos I could see they had two short stairs which is what I put on the drawing.

This is a little closer view of the north side of the tower. I was looking for marks on the wall that would indicate where the steps went. As you can see, it is not very conclusive. You could make a single long stair or a two flight arrangement like I put in the drawing. See what fits your space.

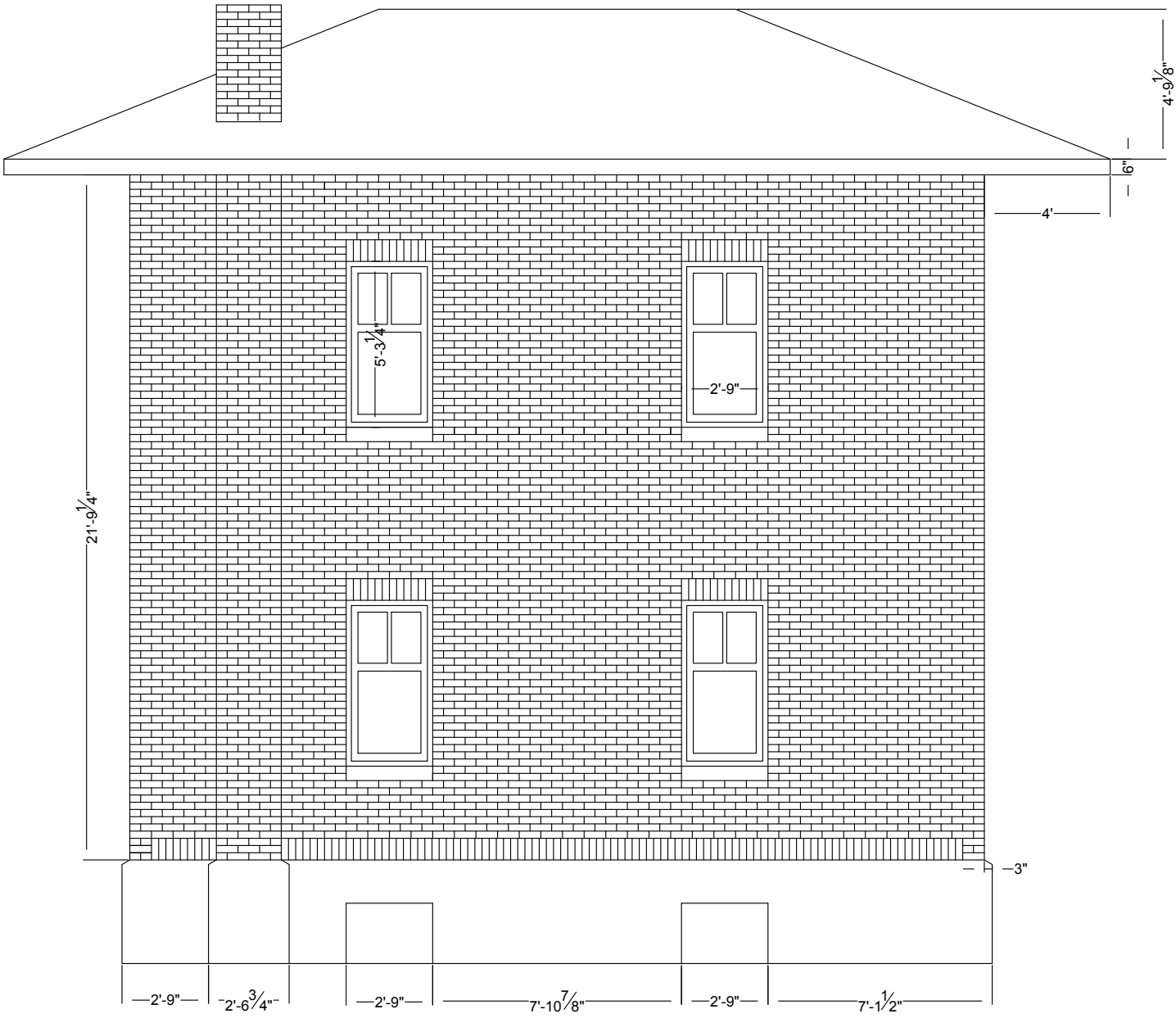
This is the street side view of the Illinois Central tower in Ashkum, Illinois.



This is the south side of the tower at Ashkum Illinois. Note the brick work patterns.



This is the north side of the tower at Ashkum, Illinois. My best guess on how the stairs were is shown in red.



This is the street side of the tower at Ashkum, Illinois.

This is the track side of the tower at Ashkum Illinois.

Ashkum, Illinois today. At one time, the main line was two tracks here with a crossover that the tower controlled. The tower is by highway 45 as indicated in the photo. Today, the track goes to single track south of Ashkum. The switch is still a control point that is controlled by the railway traffic controller (dispatcher) in Homewood, Illinois.

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This ex Missouri Pacific inspection car was at the railroad museum in Eurica Springs Arkansas. I took the photo in the 1980's. The museum is gone and all the equipment is gone. I don't know what ever happened to this inspection car. The car is a dandy and would make a very interesting project.


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