

From coal mine to coal tower

BY DONALD SIMS

Photos by the author

WHEN it comes to studying a short-line railroad, there are usually two phases that a modeler considers. One is copying the structures and equipment, while the other is concerned with a line's operating characteristics. The Utah Ry., which makes a 95-mile haul of coal in its namesake state, contains a lot of interest for those looking into either or both aspects with a view to lifting ideas.

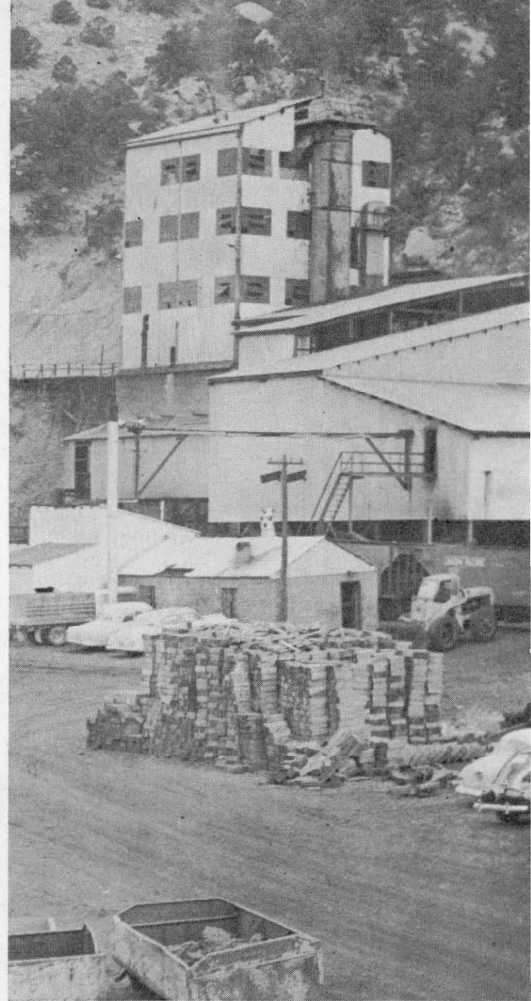
Although the railroad is dieselized now, just about every facility that existed to handle steamers is still on the property. So take your choice of motive power; the scene won't alter much either way.

Let's tackle the operating end of this short line first. It explains the Utah Ry.'s layout and perhaps can be adapted to whatever you've already got worked up in the way of a model pike. Traffic on a coal carrier is primarily a night and day affair — all loads in one direction, empties in the opposite — and this particular railroad

is no exception. Although the Utah Ry.'s haul is close to 95 miles from one end to the other, only about one fourth of that distance operates as a separate line. The other part consists of trackage rights over the Denver & Rio Grande Western roadbed, and some joint rail under operating control of the big road.

On a model line, you could have your motive power from a short line using trackage rights to get from the mines to "Big City Terminal." It gives you a chance to come up with some different loco color schemes, yet be consistent with actual practice. The coal route would be a single-track line feeding into twin rails of the larger concern, and adding some fun to the dispatcher's chores. There's the problem of fitting a slow-moving coal drag into the current of traffic. Perhaps you could reserve the overseeing of coal-route trains for friends who drop in and want something to do.

The short line itself has seven road

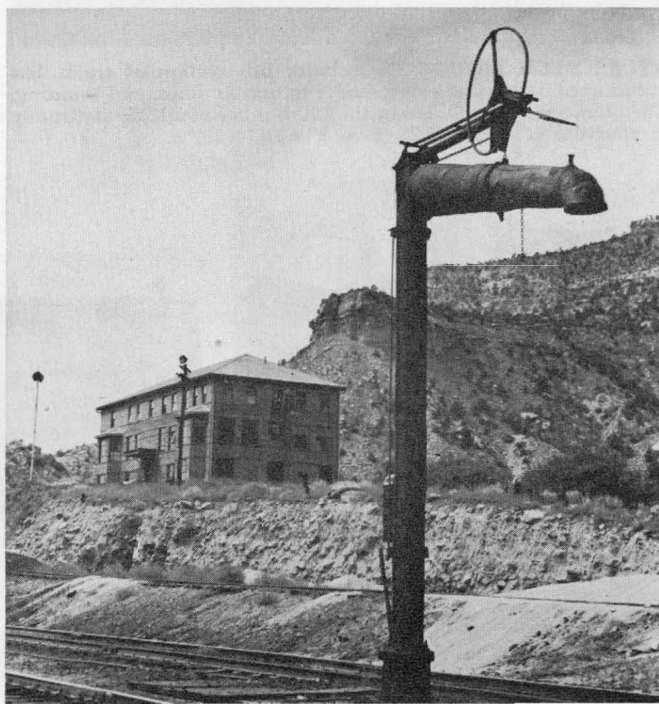
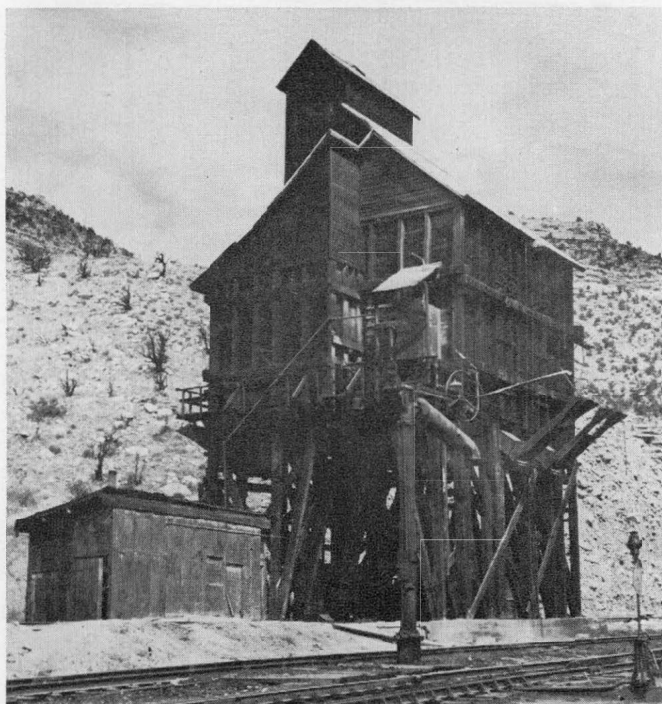


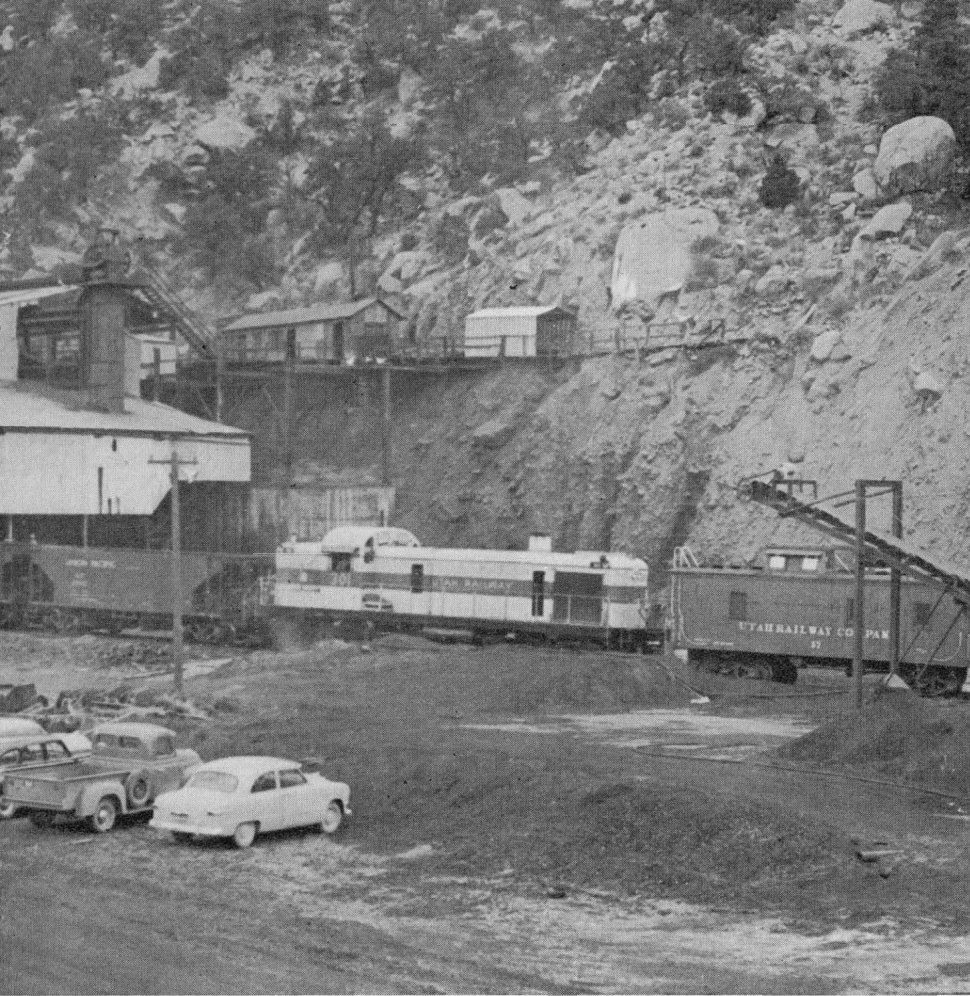
Build a mine from a kit or from scratch to resemble this coal mine at Wattis, Utah. To reach this point, trains climb a 4 per cent plus grade.

switchers on its roster, all Alco. It keeps one diesel in the Union Pacific's terminal at Provo for switching duty, while the other six are used to lift

You can use steam or diesel power on your Utah Ry. This old coaling tower now supplies sand for diesels.

You'll want headquarters, too, so why not pattern your building after the prototype overlooking Martin Yard?





coal drags from the headquarters at Martin to 7500-foot-high Soldier Summit. Four road switchers serve as a midtrain helper as far as the summit. Then they run light back to Martin while the drag continues on to Provo. Coming back, the two units can handle 70 empties over the mountain without helpers.

It works out that a loaded train leaves Martin at night, while the empties return in early morning. Then a lone unit takes part of the light hoppers on Utah Ry. single track to mines at Hiawatha and Wattis, about 20 miles away. It returns in late afternoon with loads while a second mine run goes up a nearby branch for more tonnage. When a day's mine capacity is pulled, then a coal drag is made up and highballed for a mountain trip.

A parallel model would find the scale Coal Creek & Western's marshalling yard on a hill near the Overland Central's main line. It wouldn't be a large affair, but adequate enough to take care of a couple of mine runs that originate in the nearby mountains. The daily mainline drag can be made up using part of the CC&W's single iron. And it will take some switching to sandwich those helpers into the middle.

Like the Utah Ry., the scale replica won't own a roundhouse, but it will

have an engine shed. It has room for two through tracks and can house all the road's motive power. For diesels you'll need a small overhead crane outside to take care of mechanical repairs.

And even if you do run internal combustion power, there's still room for a coaling tower. The one at Martin is a real classic, big and soot-stained from years of supplying coal to hungry steamers. In its present role, it's used to feed sand to diesels. Liberal

use of cardboard and wood stringers would do quite well in working up a free-lance model. Common sense will give you what proportions are necessary to do the job. You can be approximate on detail and still come out with an interesting structure.

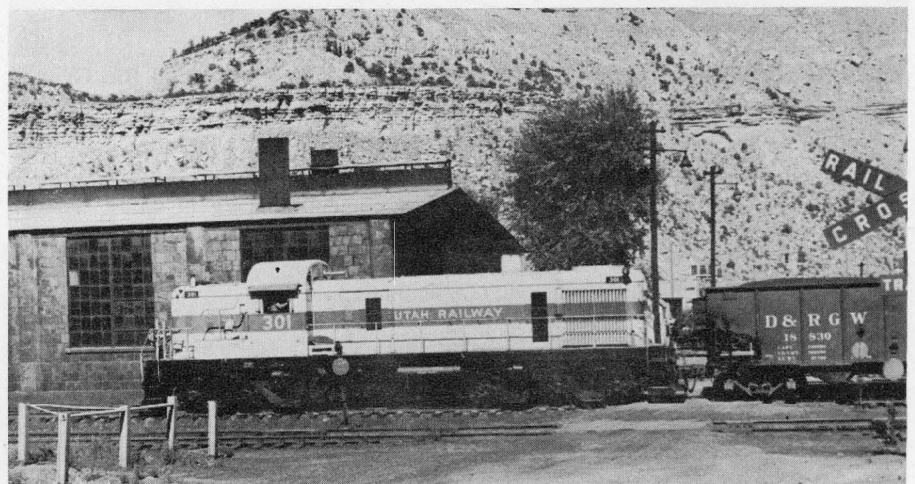
Have you any old trucks or wheels around the layout that aren't being used? If so, there's an ideal spot for them behind the enginehouse. Utah Ry. keeps a few dozen wheels there and so can the Coal Creek & Western. Odd bits of rail will make the tracks to hold them. You'll probably notice that each track consists of four rails staggered to allow closer stacking of the wheels.

The CC&W's stores department will have an old-time flavor if you follow prototype design, for the Utah Ry. houses part of its stores in an old gas motor car that once provided passenger service for coal miners. Or, if you prefer, you could have an operable car making connection with the Overland Central's fast-wheeling streamliners.

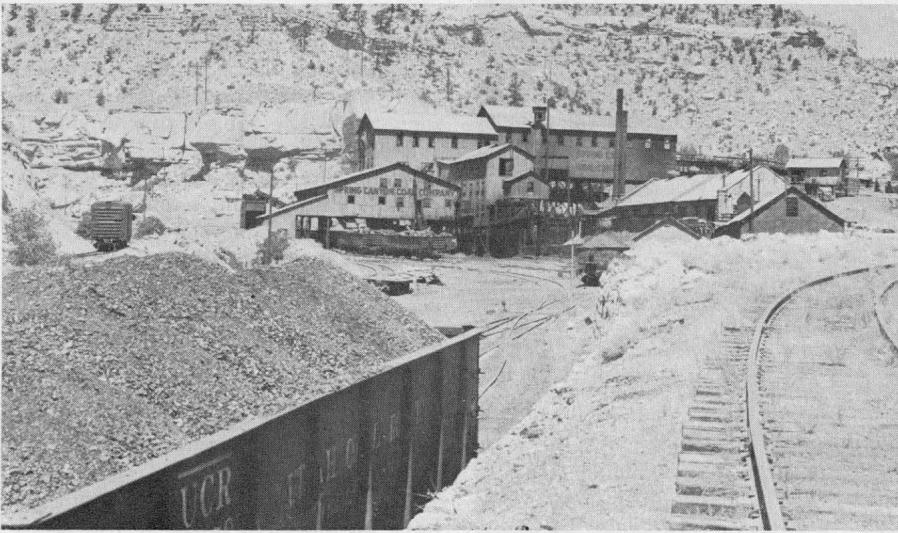
Headquarters for the short line will be a three-story brick building that looks like a school. Located on a slight rise, it can see or be seen from anywhere in the yard. As added atmosphere, there's a train-order signal with clipped arms next to the front door.

You won't need much signaling for the CC&W. Very rarely will there be more than one train working the mines. To follow prototype procedure, you'll need only three block signals near the road's terminal. The south end of Martin Yard ends at a tunnel; then about a half mile farther on there's a junction with the Spring Canyon branch. One signal is placed at either end of the tunnel, the other on the branch where it comes into the junction.

Since coal is the only commodity on



The Utah Ry. has seven road switchers; this one is in operation at Helper.



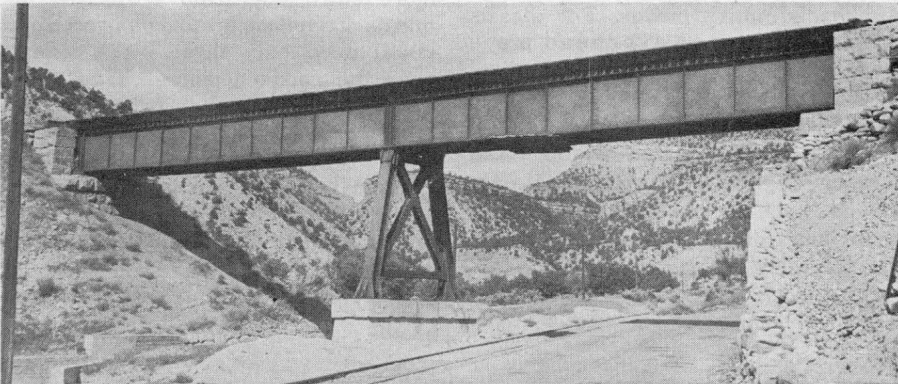
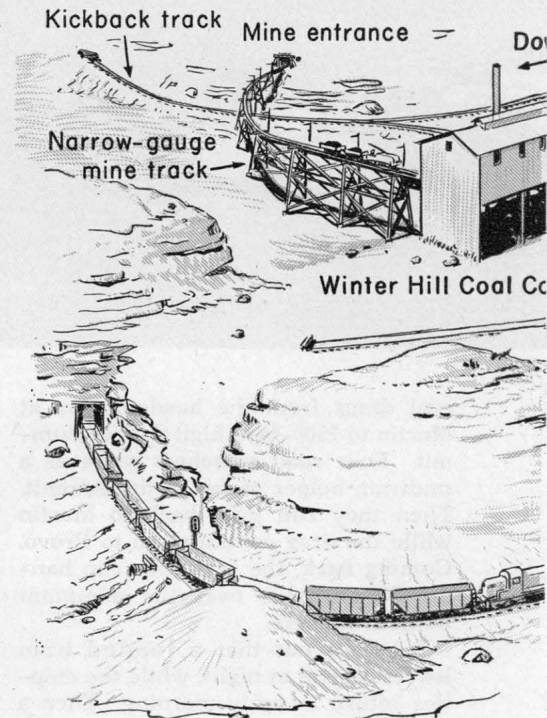
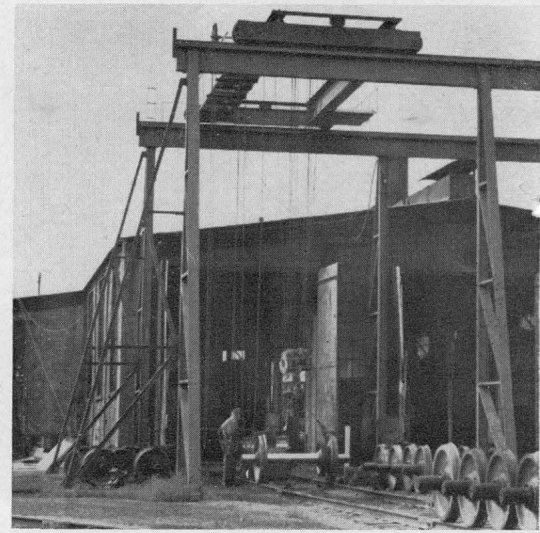
The Utah Ry. hauls only coal, and this is one of the mines that feeds it.

the Coal Creek & Western, and since it originates in the mountains, you can have the roadbed doing just about anything. It can wander under, over or around itself in getting to the mines. In fact, Utah Ry. has a yard at one coal company that is curved around a mountain shelf several hundred feet above the main line. And it takes a 4 per cent plus grade to reach that location.

All the coal mines are situated on inclined track. Utah Ry. shuttles

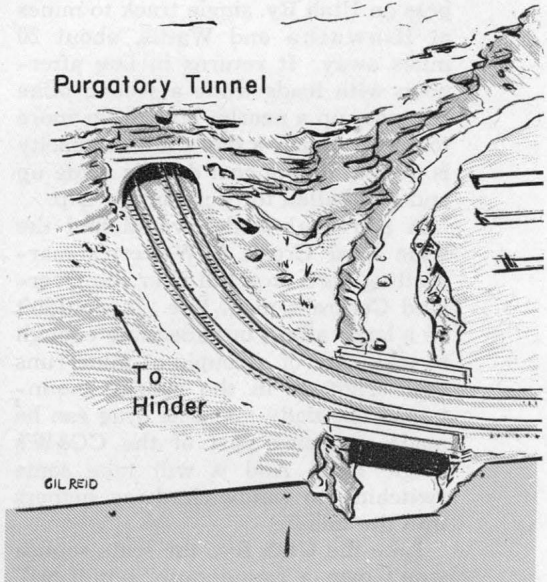
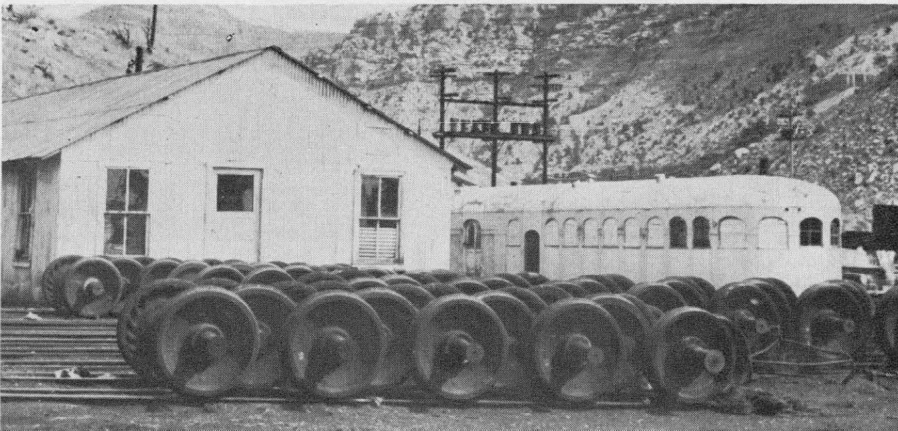
empty cars to a point above a mine, from which point they drop down to a mine tippie by gravity. Once loaded, they roll to a yard below where a mine run picks them up.

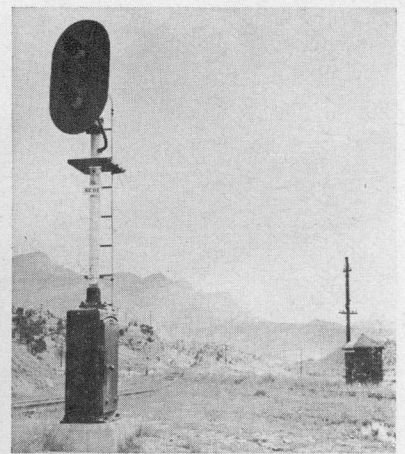
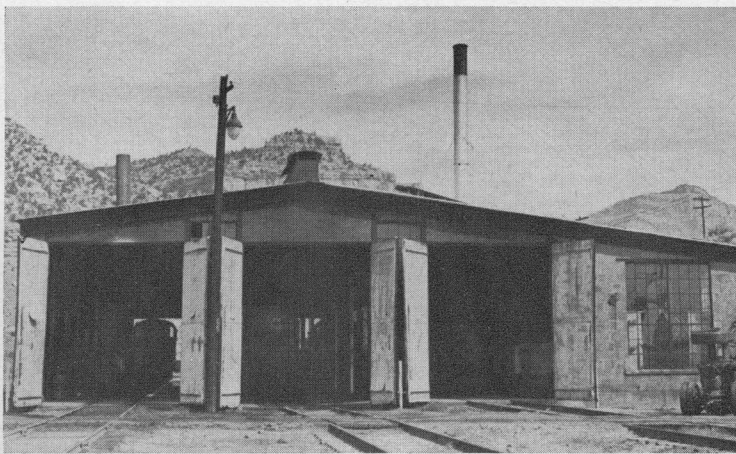
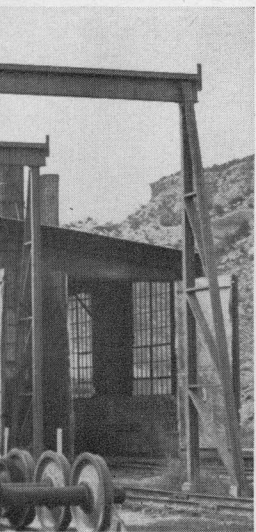
Anyway you look at it, there's a lot of variety on the Utah Ry. From operating a train to modeling a coal tower or even a coal mine, you'll find a lot of busy evenings can be devoted to the Coal Creek & Western. And the only thing standard about it will be the track width.



This overhead bridge carries Utah Ry. coal drags over a road and Rio Grande branch track. It's located near the junction with Spring Canyon branch.

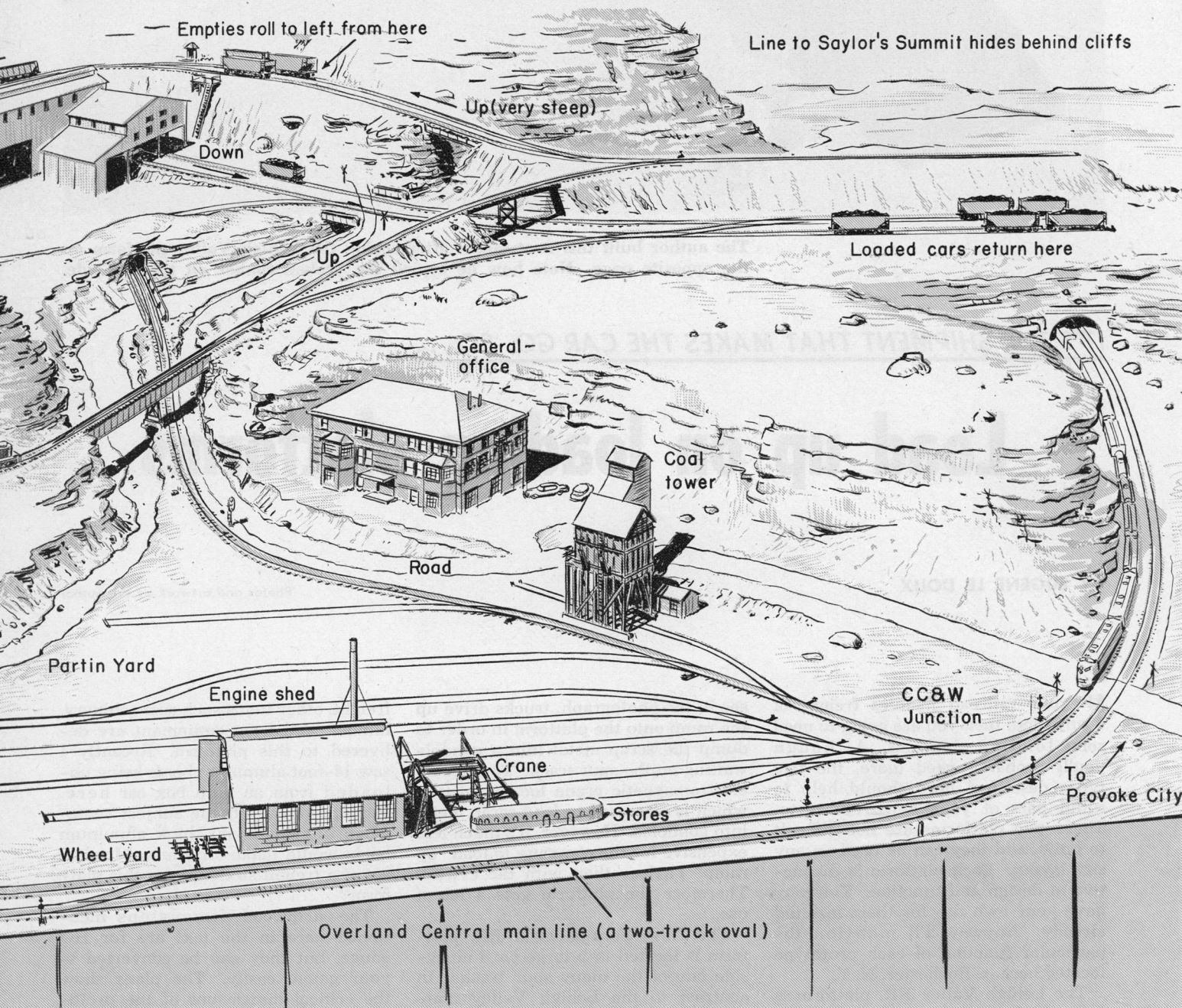
Details for your scale Martin Yard: an old gas motor car which is now a storage shed, and staggered tracks to allow closer stacking of spare wheels.





Left and above: The engine shed at Martin has an overhead crane at one end. Two tracks run through; diesel wheels are on stub.

Block signal marks the junction with the main track to Hiawatha.



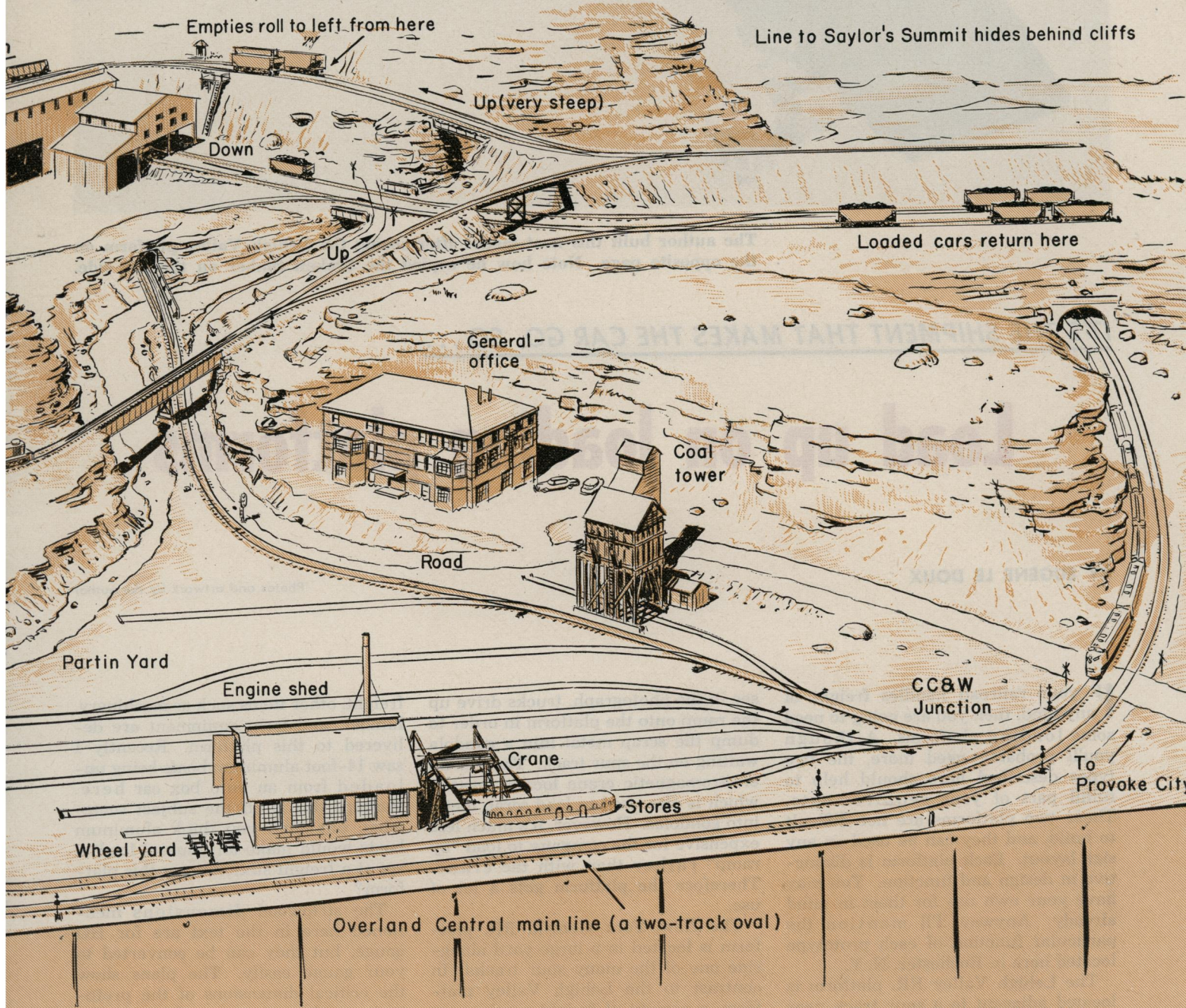
Track plan by Linn Westcott. Drawing by Gil Reid.

Kickback track
Mine entrance
Narrow-gauge mine track
Winter Hill Coal Co



Purgatory Tunnel
To Hinder

GIL REID



Empties roll to left from here
Up (very steep)
Down
Line to Saylor's Summit hides behind cliffs

Loaded cars return here

General office
Coal tower

Road

Partin Yard

Engine shed

Crane

Stores

Wheel yard

CC&W Junction

To Provoke City

Overland Central main line (a two-track oval)

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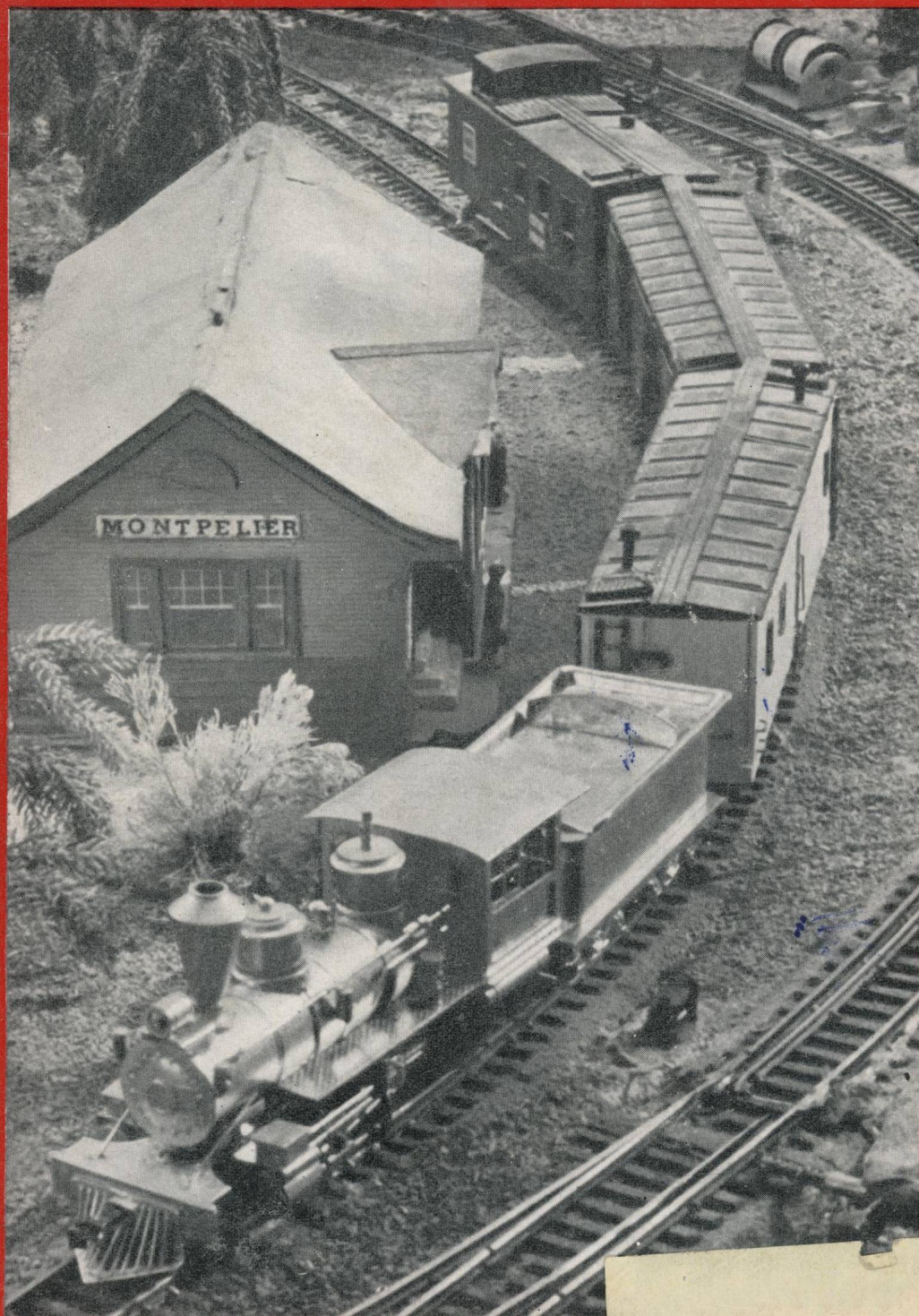
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