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MARCH 1971

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RAILROAD MODEL

CRAFTSMAN



RMC FAN TRIP ON **THE GORRE & DAPHETID**

Ektachrome by John Allen



- HO PASSENGER CAR CONVERSION
- 4-8-2 CONVERSIONS
- LOCOMOTIVE CRANES
- RAILROAD WITH A CANAL TRACKPLAN
- FOURTH CAR FOR THE *PIONEER ZEPHYR*

RAILROAD MODEL CRAFTSMAN

Including TOY TRAINS combined with ELECTRIC TRAINS and HOBBY RAILROADING, MINIATURE RAILROADING, MODEL & RAILWAY NEWS, THE O GAGER, and THE MODELMAKER (Est. 1924) Magazines.



NOTES ON AN OLD TIMETABLE

About Detail & Scale

When the first issue of (Railroad) Model Craftsman made its appearance with the March 1933 issue, model railroading was in its infancy. Most modelers were tinplaters and they didn't tell others because they didn't want to develop a reputation of being a ding-a-ling. You could buy a number of model railroad parts and kits from guys like Bill Walthers, Fred Icken, John Tyler, and George Stock. Nobody much cared if rails were oversized, or if 3rd rail shoes were too big. A layout that had T rails and 3rd rail *was* scale.

Sometimes we wish that life today was as simple, insofar as model railroading is concerned. Sometimes we feel that standards and detailing have developed to such a state that the fun in model railroading has been replaced by a demanding thoroughness almost Puritan in nature. And we do appreciate a super detailed brass engine rolling on code 70 rails with wood ties as much as anyone. We just happen to think that there are a lot of modelers around who have neither the time, talent, nor funds for such perfection. Why can't modelers of 1971 have as much fun with simpler equipment, just as did the great modelers of thirty years ago? This writer, and thousands of others, thought that paper sided cars and soft lead castings were pretty great. In our minds, the detail was at least equal to the prototype. Maybe better!

Some of the happiest modelers we've known never did stop using Lionel track, with either scale or tinplate equipment. Time was when all O scale equipment was optionally available for use on Lionel track.

Maybe the answer for many modelers today lies somewhere in the middle, using such techniques as give us the results that satisfy us the most. There's nothing wrong with RTR track, whether N, HO, or O, providing your equipment runs well on it. What if it doesn't look quite as good as the four-spikes-per-tie track (those guys probably cheat in the tunnels anyway!). Some modelers have set such high standards for themselves that almost all commercial equipment is unusable. Few of us have the time for such dedication.

So build your pike as you like, and when the super scale boys come around and complain, ask to see pix and a discussion of how complete their pikes are and how well they run.

Hal

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THE COVER

John Allen's Gorre & Daphetid, an HO scale empire in Monterey, Cal., has been featured a number of times in RAILROAD MODEL CRAFTSMAN and other hobby publications, leading many to assume that by now every spectacular square inch of it must have been reviewed. This is happily not the case, as the RMC crew learned during a recent tour of the line from Port to Andrews through the rugged Akinbak Mountains. In fact, our trip had to be terminated short of Cold Shoulder as track gangs are still working hard to push the line through that region. We'll check back on their progress at a later date, but for now we hope you'll join us as we review the photographic highlights (page 28) of the first portion of our fan trip on the local behind gas-electric 60 from Port to Akin. Ektachrome by John Allen.

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RMC Fan Trip on the

GORRE & DAPHETID

The RMC Staff and private car No. 4, the *Ramsey*, recently headed west for a fan trip over portions of the spectacular G&D in the Akinbak Mountains area.

The most distant trip yet made by RMC's new private car No. 4, the *Ramsey*, was a recent trip to the Akinbak Mountain region of the western United States. This area, well known for the sheer rock cliffs and deep gorges which presented great problems for railroad surveying and engineering departments, is traversed by the Gorre & Daphetid Railroad, a marvel of railroad engineering which leaps from wall to wall of the noted Giant Canyon and Devil's Gulch.

The tour over part of the Gorre & Daphetid was made in two segments. This month's report covers the Port to Akin trip; next month we'll report on the Akin to Andrews portion of our journey (which features even more spectacular scenery).

The *Ramsey* was coupled to the regular gas-electric local run between Port and Andrews. Ordinarily, this car only hauls itself or one small wood trailer, so the heavyweight steel observation proved to be a real test of strength for old No. 60. Grades run as steep as 4% on this section!

This portion of the Gorre & Daphetid, more commonly known as the G.D. Line, is probably the most difficult and expensive

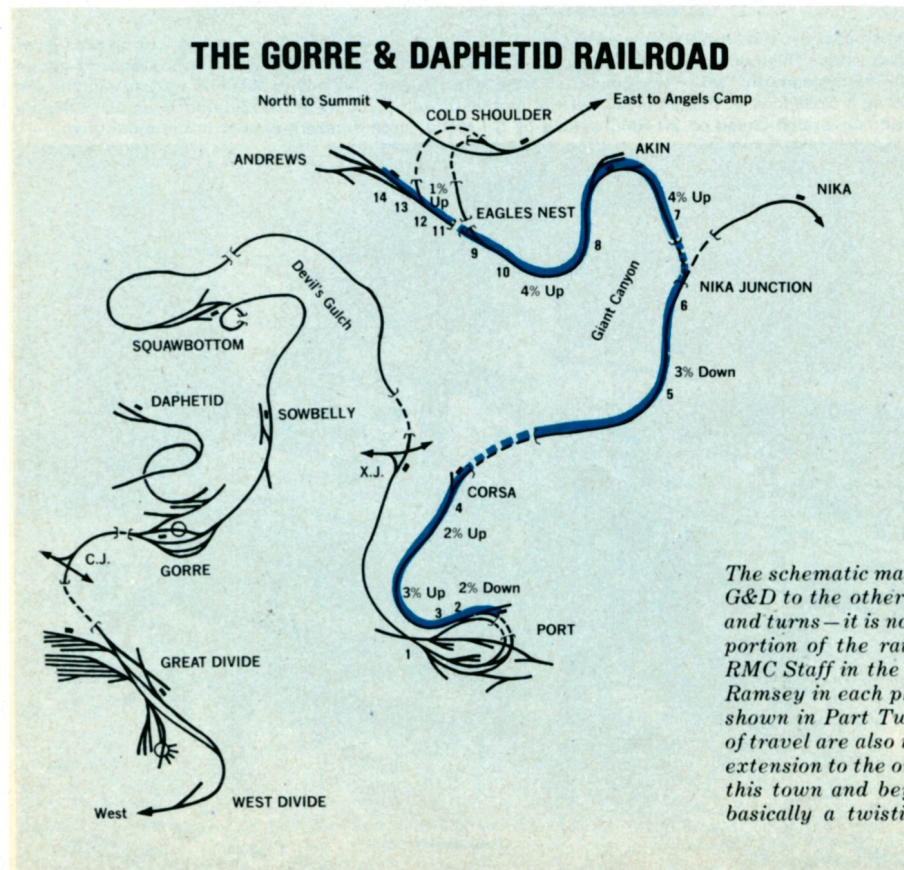
of the railroad's rights-of-way as it twists and climbs the rugged Akinbak Mountains. We weren't able to go as far as Summit, or even Cold Shoulder, as the track that far up the mountain was closed by severe snow storms during our brief visit. We were fortunate to see portions of the upper G.D. Line across the canyon, however.

As noted, the trip started from the river city of Port; we then climbed up hill to the suburban station at Corsa. After a brief stop, we plunged through the mountain wall via a long tunnel and emerged in the sparsely settled mountainside below Angels Camp. We then crossed French Gulch where four tracks at different elevations cling to the side of the mountain. After passing over numerous bridges and through tunnels, crossing over Texas Draw in the process, we stopped for lunch in Akin (a refreshing change from several days of excellent but by now somewhat monotonous dining in the *Ramsey*).

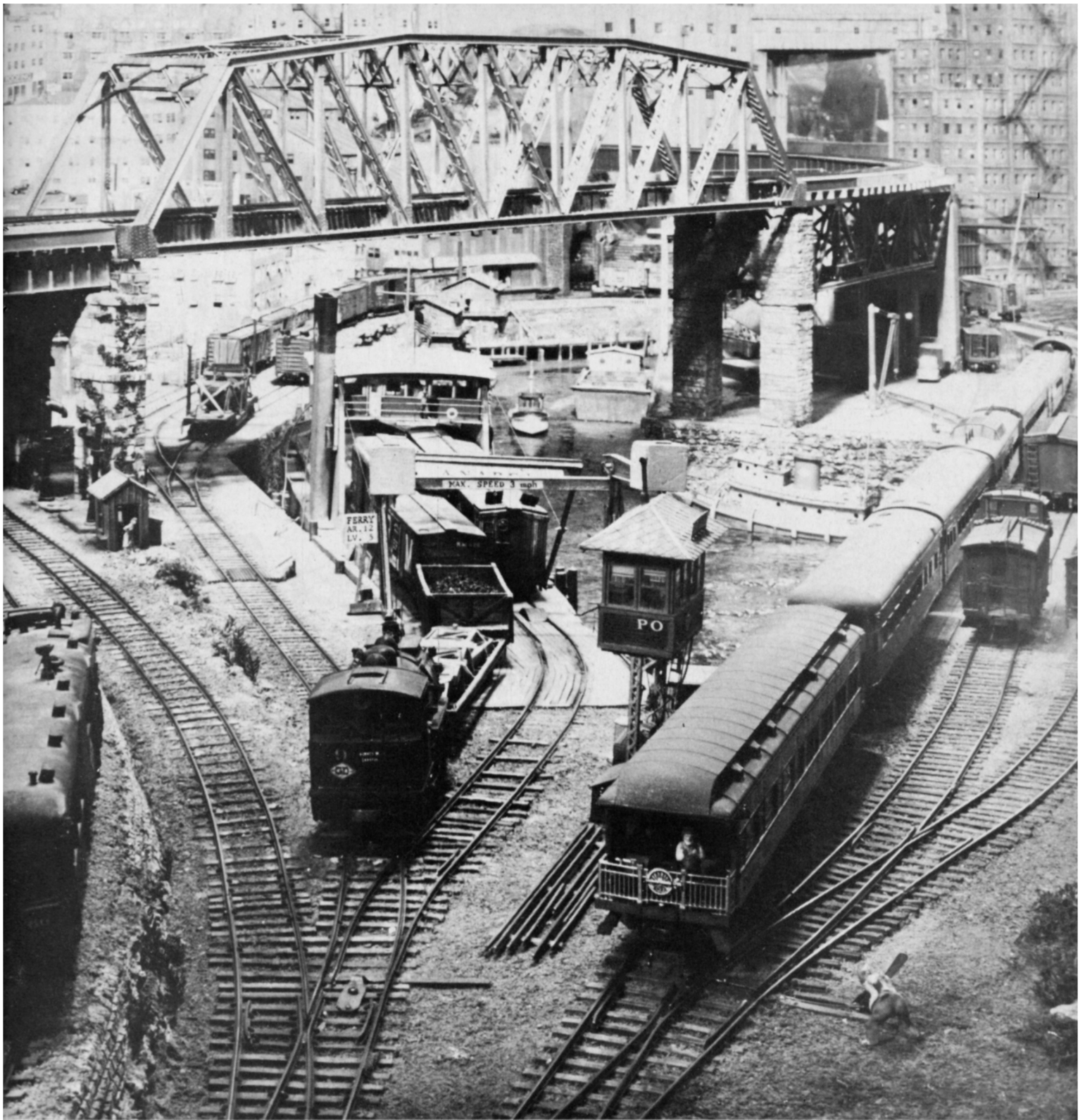
The G&D management headed by John Allen graciously allowed several stops for those with cameras, a special treat in this area where there are no roads and all trains are powered by steam.



1



The schematic map at left shows the trackage from one end of the G&D to the other, and—though it does follow most of the twists and turns—it is not to scale. The heavy line in color indicates that portion of the railroad, from Port to Andrews, covered by the RMC Staff in the *Ramsey*; the numbers show the position of the *Ramsey* in each photo (photo locations numbered above 7 will be shown in Part Two next month). Major grades for this direction of travel are also indicated. G&D track gangs have completed the extension to the outskirts of Cold Shoulder, but the track through this town and beyond is not yet complete. The railroad itself is basically a twisting, looping bridge route through the Akinbaks.



Part One

As the RMC private car arrived in Port on the end of the regular through train from Great Divide (this train terminates at Port), the power for our tour of the Gorre & Daphetid—gas-electric No. 60—arrived from Andrews. It can be seen descending the slight grade at the extreme right. The passenger train then went around the balloon track to reverse its direction for the stop at the Port station, seen in the upper left corner with its square, peaked tower. The train then dropped off the Ramsey, and—after it too had reversed its direction on the balloon—the gas-electric backed onto the Ramsey for the trip to Andrews. This gas car is double ended (can be controlled from either end) and hence usual-

Photographed by John Allen

ly doesn't bother to change directions. However, when hauling a trailer the motorman prefers to keep the car's passenger section next to the trailer for the convenience of the passengers. No one is allowed to pass through the mail room in the car which is between the motorman and baggage sections. The always busy Dockside switcher was working freight cars on and off the car ferry when we arrived in Port. Though this near water level section of the Gorre & Daphetid is relatively flat, G&D crews are quick to point out to the first-time visitor that many miles of steep grades and sheer cliffs are literally just around the corner ... a challenge for railroaders and a scenic treat for passengers.





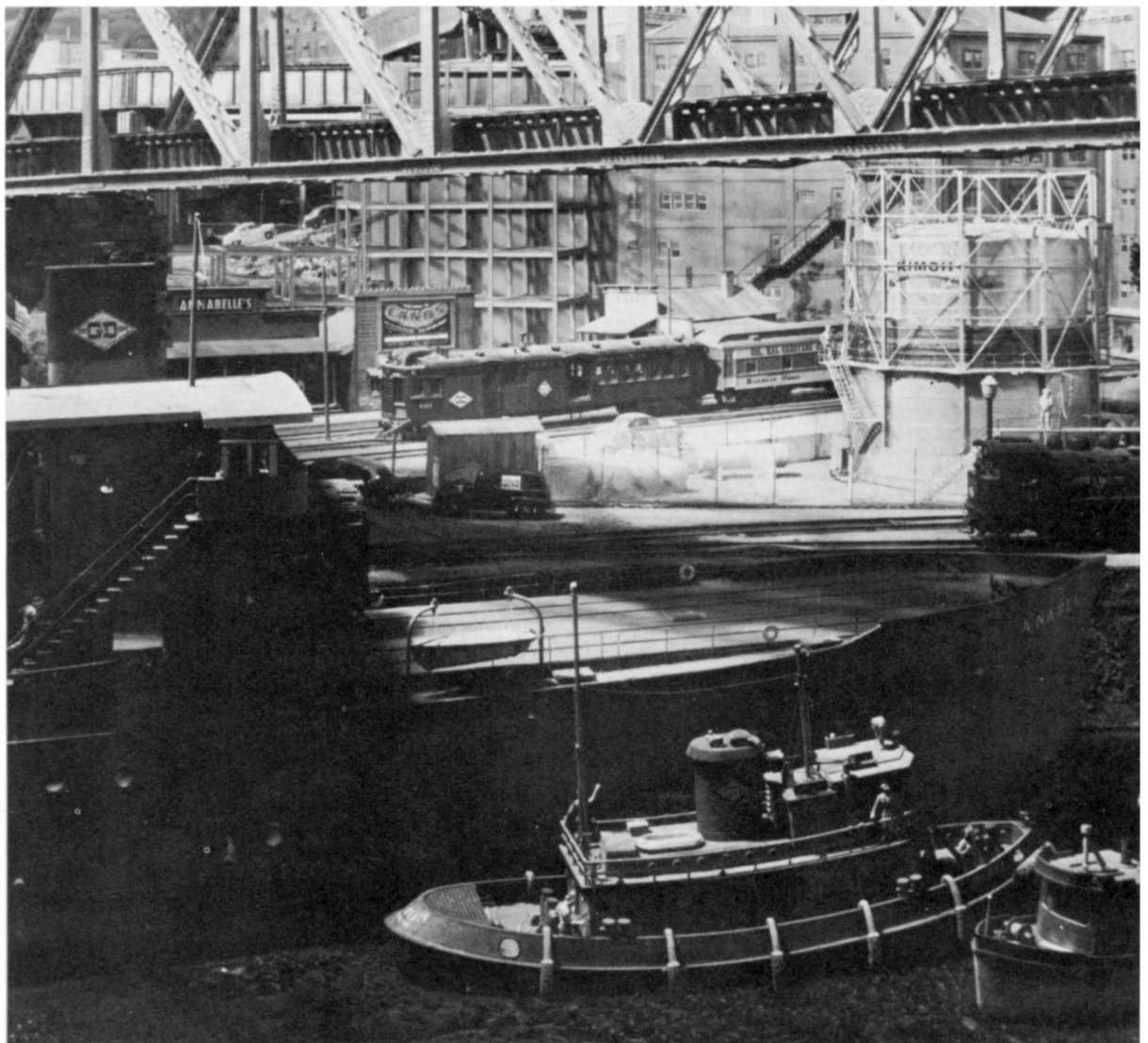
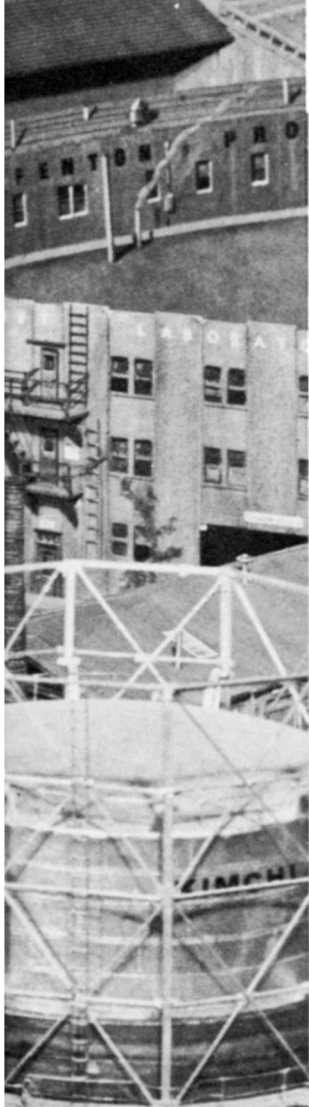
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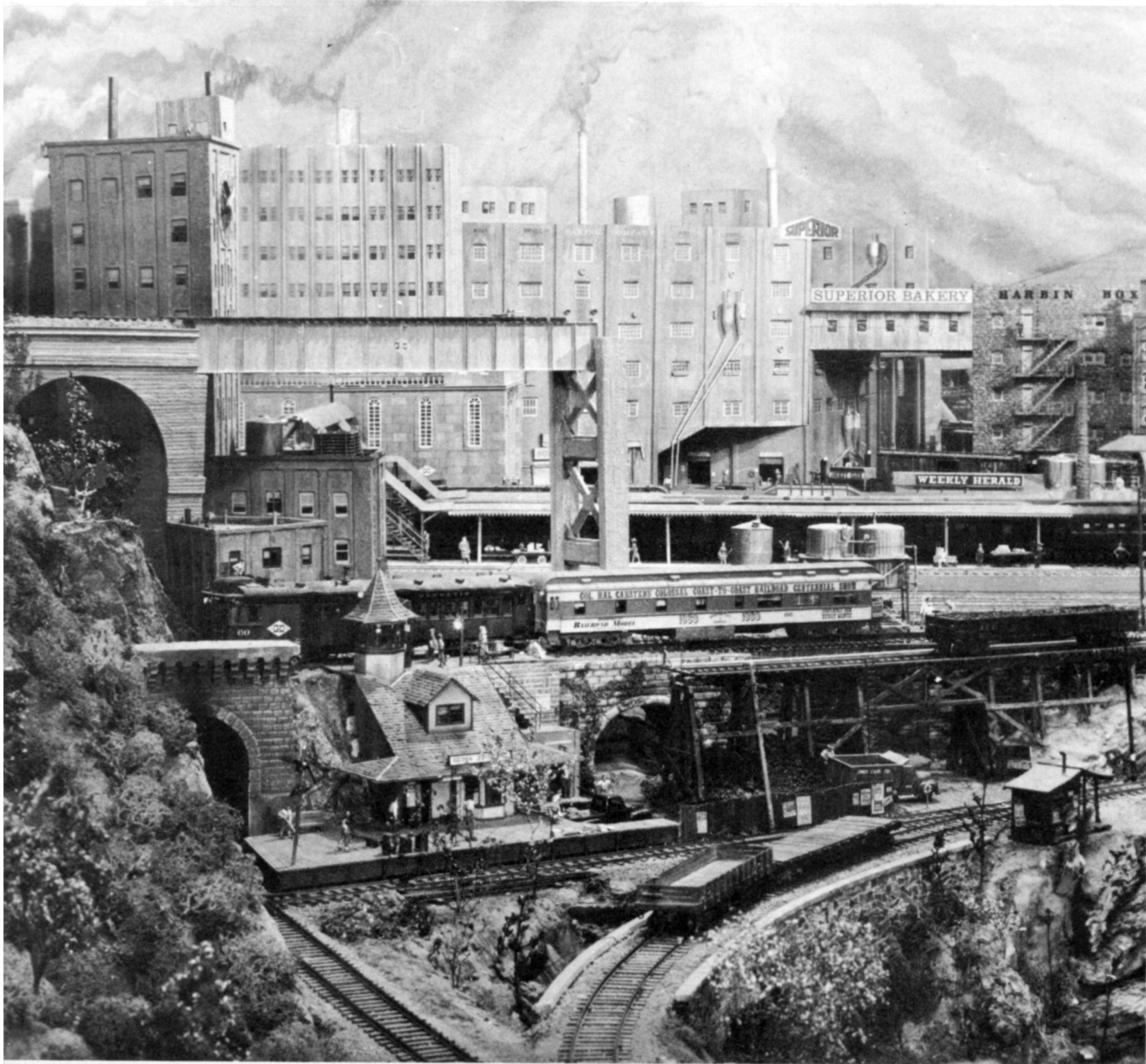


After the gas-electric was turned and backed onto the Ramsey, the short train headed out of Union Station down Railroad Avenue. Three tracks run down this street: two are for the railroad and the third is for the Cooper Electric trolley line. This busy industrial city of Port is growing rapidly and may soon become larger than Great Divide itself. Unfortunately, the city fathers made little area planning efforts and—as a result—hotels, small shops and the like often find a new neighbor in the form of a packing plant or gas works.

As the gas car and RMC private car passed the gas works and several new buildings under construction along Railroad Avenue, we caught a glimpse of a ubiquitous Dockside dilligently working the wharfs and piers along the waterfront at Port. Small boats must thread their way through the narrow confines of the ship basin, taking care to avoid tug boats and the car ferry Anabel (which was being loaded in the foreground as our train rumbled slowly by). The noises of railroad and waterfront are heard 'round the clock at Port.

3

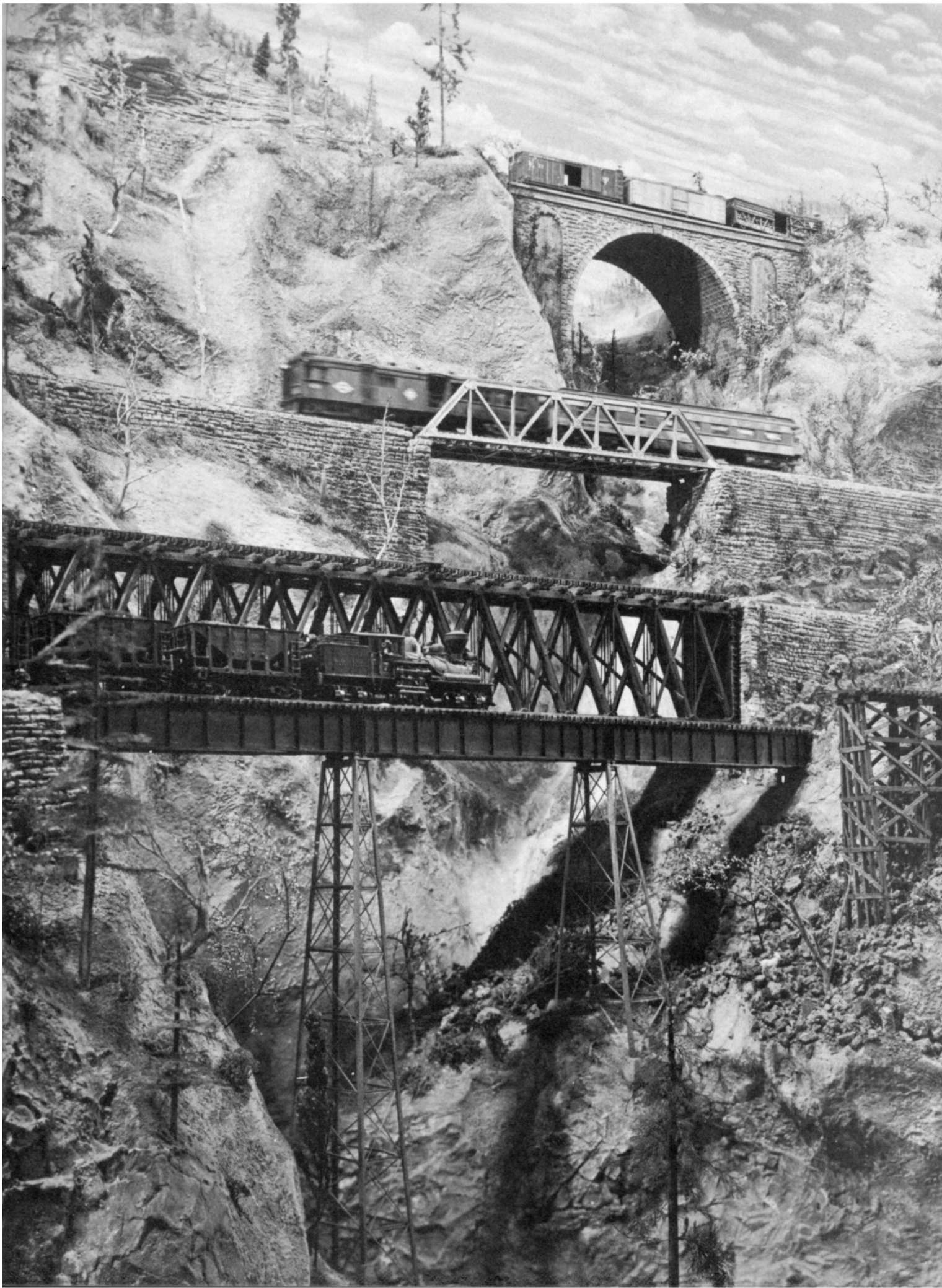


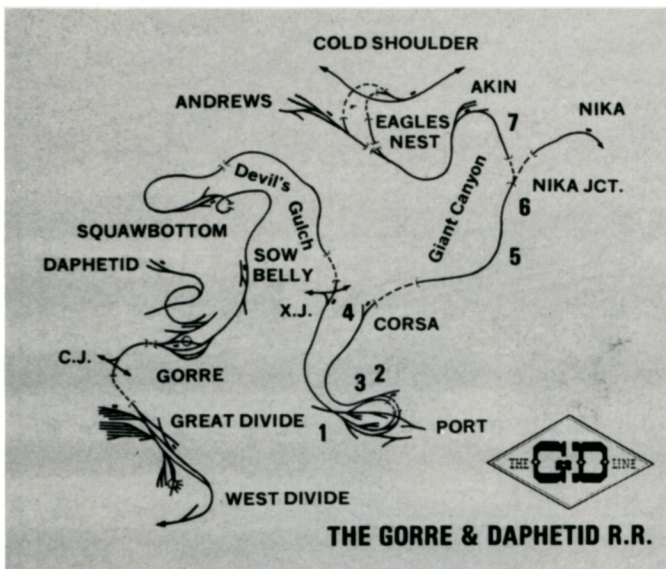


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After a long pull up the grade to the suburban station at Corsa, we stopped briefly as coach passengers, mail and baggage were loaded into the gas-electric. Needless to say, the addition of the brightly colored Ramsey caused a bit of a stir even in the more metropolitan areas along the Gorre & Daphetid. At this point we were mindful of the long tunnel just ahead—and thankful for the relatively clean exhaust of the gas-electric compared to a steam locomotive. Once we were through the tunnel, we emerged into the clean, unspoiled mountain country so typical of the G&D. As may be noted by the bridge construction above our train, another level of track will soon pass overhead nearby. Though railroads in many parts of the country are abandoning branch lines which have fallen into hard times, the territory served by the Gorre & Daphetid is rapidly growing with new industry moving into the less congested area. This insures continued prosperity for the G&D as an originator of freight traffic as well as a heavily trafficked bridge route over the rugged Akinbak Mountains. Continued passenger service is insured due to lack of highways through the narrow confines of the canyons.

The short train briefly picked up a burst of speed as we crested the hill through the tunnel and emerged on a down grade. At this point we passed three other railroad tracks, both above and below us, as the rights-of-way cling tenaciously to the steep mountainside. This is French Gulch, which we crossed on a short steel through truss. Just below is the only large wood bridge left on the G&D main line. Below that is a Shay we spotted as it worked laboriously up a 4% grade with a string of ore cars heavily laden with cinnabar. The Shay crossed over French Gulch on a steel trestle which replaced a wood bridge some years ago during a grade realignment (the end of the former trestle is still visible at extreme right). Railroad planners had little choice as to right-of-way location as the lines were surveyed: this canyon was the only way out of the valley, and they were forced to gain altitude a little bit at a time as they retraced their way along the steep walls, each time at a slightly higher elevation. The entire line is virtually devoid of straight track except for short sections over bridges. Though troublesome for the G&D engineering department, the scenic effect is spectacular.

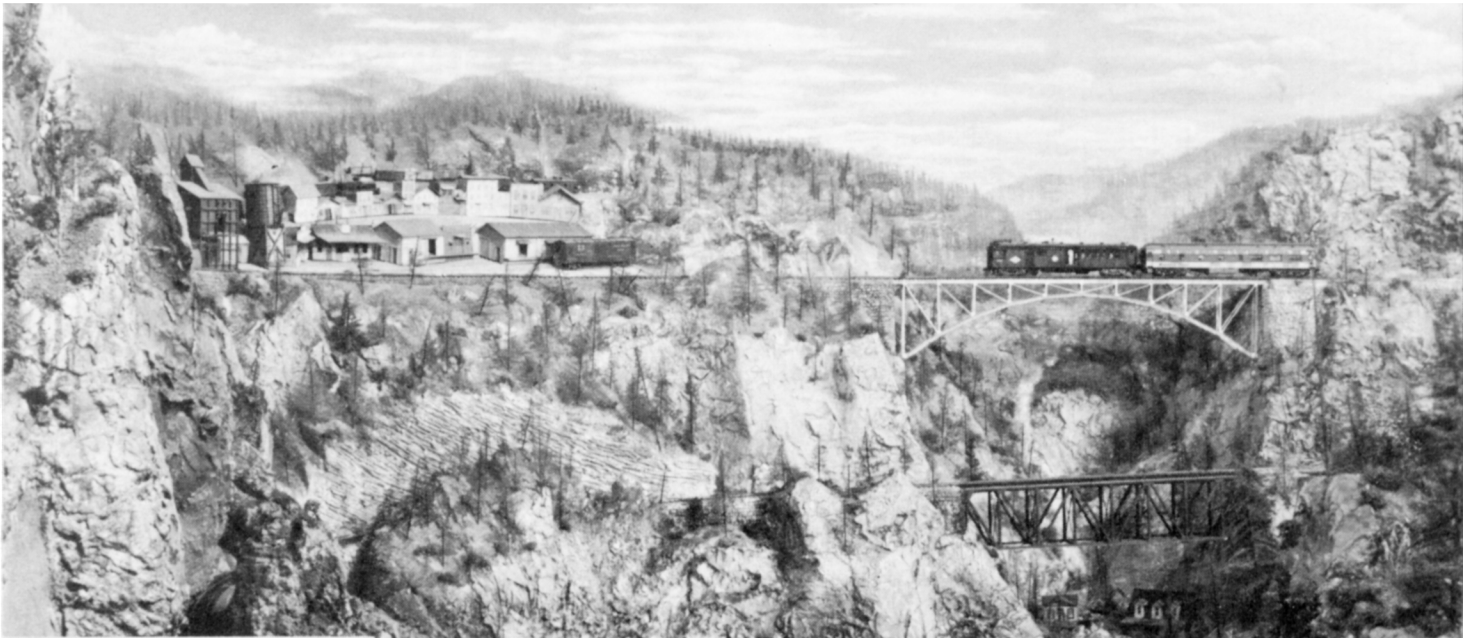




The bottom of the grade is reached as trains approach Nika Junction just inside the tunnel mouth ahead of our train in this photo. We took the left fork which roughly parallels the trackage below with a heavy freight pulling up grade (the steam locomotive's exhausts echoed several times through the narrow canyon). We will be hidden by a cut in the hill and short tunnels. This unusual junction is partly in a tunnel, rare except for subway systems. An old passenger train was visible coming down the right fork from Nika in the distance, but we cleared the junction before it arrived. The burned out area of forest was rumored to have been caused by sparks from laboring steam locomotives, but the Gorre & Daphetid management has evidence to indicate it was the unfortunate result of a cigarette smoker's carelessness. This canyon is known as Devil's Gulch.

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The railcar had to strain mightily as we pulled the 4% grade from Nika Junction to Akin due to the heavyweight observation. The G&D's Official Photographer caught our train as it crossed over Texas Draw on a steel arch bridge just prior to our arrival in Akin. Far below in the foreground we spotted a local passenger train waiting at Squawbottom on the valley floor. This tiny community is completely isolated from the outside world except by rail.

Though the population of the surrounding community is not large, the dependence on and hence constant usage of the railroad makes what might otherwise appear to be an oversize station merely adequate. There are also several industries in the area. We stopped over for lunch in Akin, using the opportunity to stretch our legs a bit and see the town. The journey was then continued to Andrews, and we'll similarly continue our fan trip report next month. 