



## Albion, Maine c.1924 on the Wiscasset, Waterville, & Farmington

HOn30 Shelf Layout ©2014 Dave Falkenburg

I'm not sure if it all started after reading about Dave Frary and Bob Hayden's *Thatcher's Inlet* in *Railroad Model Craftsmen*, or *Model Railroader's* later coverage of the *Carrabasset & Dead River*, but Maine two-foot railroads have *always* piqued my interest. Capturing the essence of down-east narrow gauge provided the inspiration for this 24" x 72" HOn30 shelf layout. Albion, Maine, the northern terminus of the Wiscasset, Waterville, and Farmington Railway, serves as the prototype for this switching layout. The plan could be part of a larger layout as well.

In the early 20th century, the WW&F ran up to four mixed trains a day traversing the 43½ mile journey between Wiscasset and Albion. A typical consist featured a Forney locomotive pulling several flat cars, a few 28' boxcars, along with a coach and/or combine. Diminutive equipment and short trains make the railroad a natural subject for a small layout.

On the trip north from Wiscasset, mail, farming supplies, coal, and passengers were delivered to the rural communities along the mainline. On southbound trains, mail, passengers, milk, potatoes, and other farm products were the primary cargo destined for Wiscasset, the railroad's connection to greater New England via sailing ship or the standard gauge Maine Central Railroad.

Industries on the Albion layout include: two potato houses, the Turner Centre Dairy Association milk platform, a station track, and a single track "yard." An engine shed, coal bunker, and turntable complete the yard scene. In real life, Albion also had a cannery, a tannery, and sawmill but those have been omitted to conserve space— only the millpond has been retained for scenic interest. Crosby's tank was actually located a mile south of Albion in order to be near a natural water source. Scale drawings for many of these structures can be found in *Narrow Gauge in the Sheepscot Valley: Vol. III* by Gary Kohler and Chris McChesney or *Two Feet to the Tidewater* by Robert C. Jones and David L. Register.

Operating the layout could begin with the task of making up the daily southbound mixed train. The job could start by firing up a the steamer and switching freight cars (including icing a TCDA car) to assemble the train. Next, the crew picks up passengers and mail at Albion station. To finish, the engineer pulls onto the mainline to top off water at Crosby's tank. Similarly, an assembled northbound train could be staged on the mainline, and the task would be to terminate the train, dropping of passengers, spotting cars, and parking the engine.