

# A Covered Bridge *for the* RVJ&S

by Terry Ketcham  
Islip, New York  
Photos & drawings by the Author

Desiring a covered bridge for my Ridgway, Vance Junction, & Southern Railway, I studied pictures of railroad covered bridges to see how they were built and supported, but wasn't able to find any dimensions to help me build a scale model. So I just set my engine on a length of track and started building around it until the proportions between the engine and the bridge looked right.

The bridge was scratch built using pressure treated wood that was cut on a radial arm saw to approximate scale lumber sizes.

Waterproof glue and small nails were used throughout, and so far everything seems to be holding together just fine. The roof is

made of 1/8" plywood treated with a preservative and then covered with small pieces of cedar shingles. The shingles are way out of scale, but they were easier to cut and install than smaller ones. Recently I've seen dollhouse shingles for sale that would probably have looked a lot better. I doubt if any railroad covered bridge ever had a cedar shingle roof, but I thought it looked more interesting than planking. The roof is removeable for easy access.

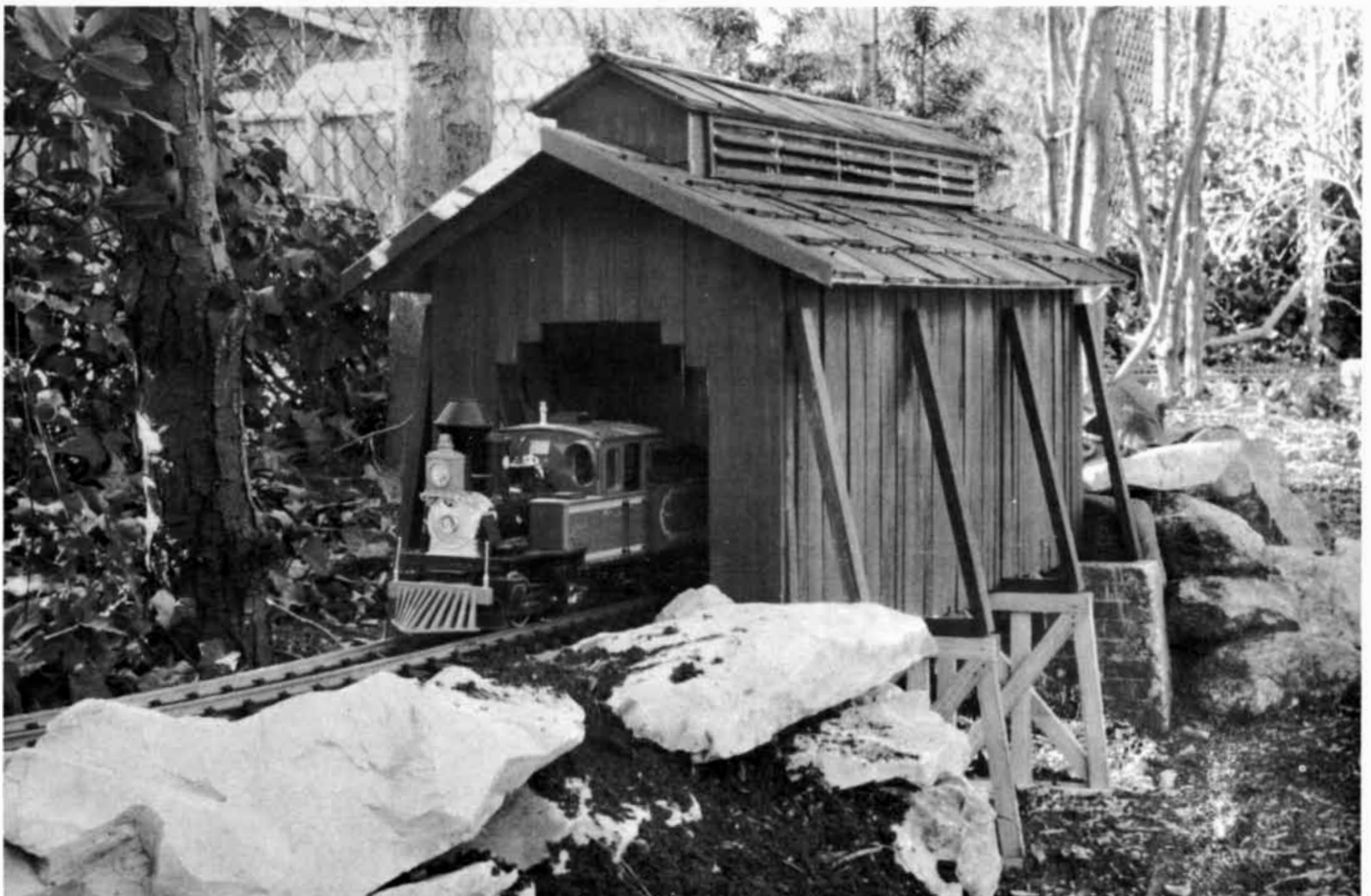
The abutments at either end are concrete made by pouring cement into a plywood mold and then scratching some stonework on the surface after it hardened.

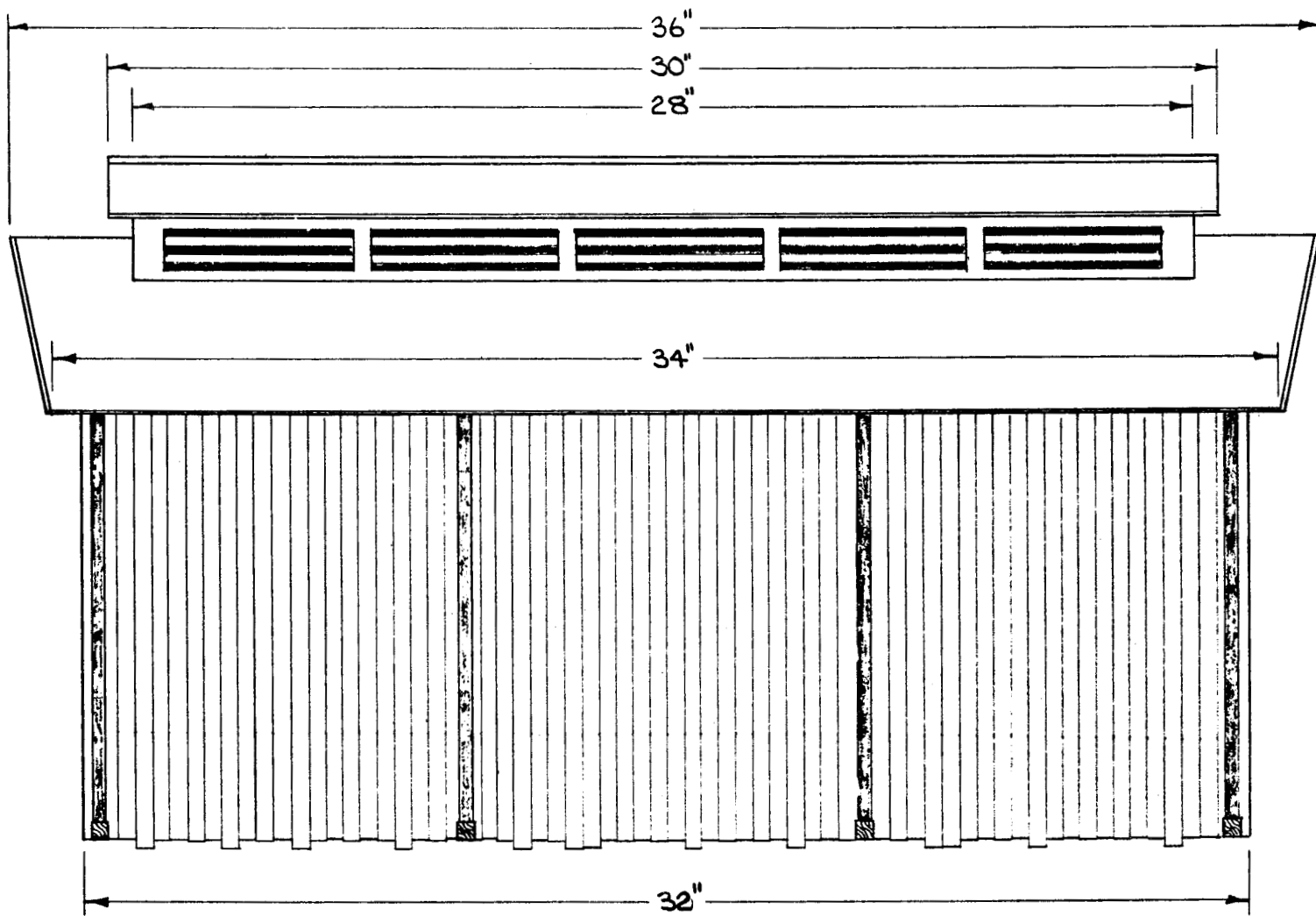
Most railroad covered bridges seemed to be supported in the

middle. I built a few wood bents to cover this detail. A few coats of red preservative covers the bridge, and marine varnish was brushed onto the roof.

I tried to show some interior bracing detail on only one side of the bridge at the ends, since it can only be viewed from one side. Looking back, I wish I had detailed the entire inside of the bridge.

Since I did a lot of brush clearing and removed a lot of ivy from the back fence, I've not only met my neighbor, but discovered he is a railroad buff and is most interested in my railroad. Unfortunately, he has the worst view of the railroad because I designed it to be viewed from my yard only.

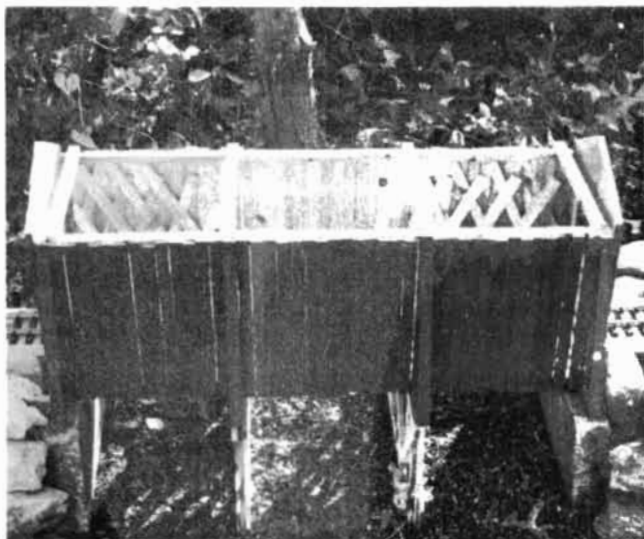
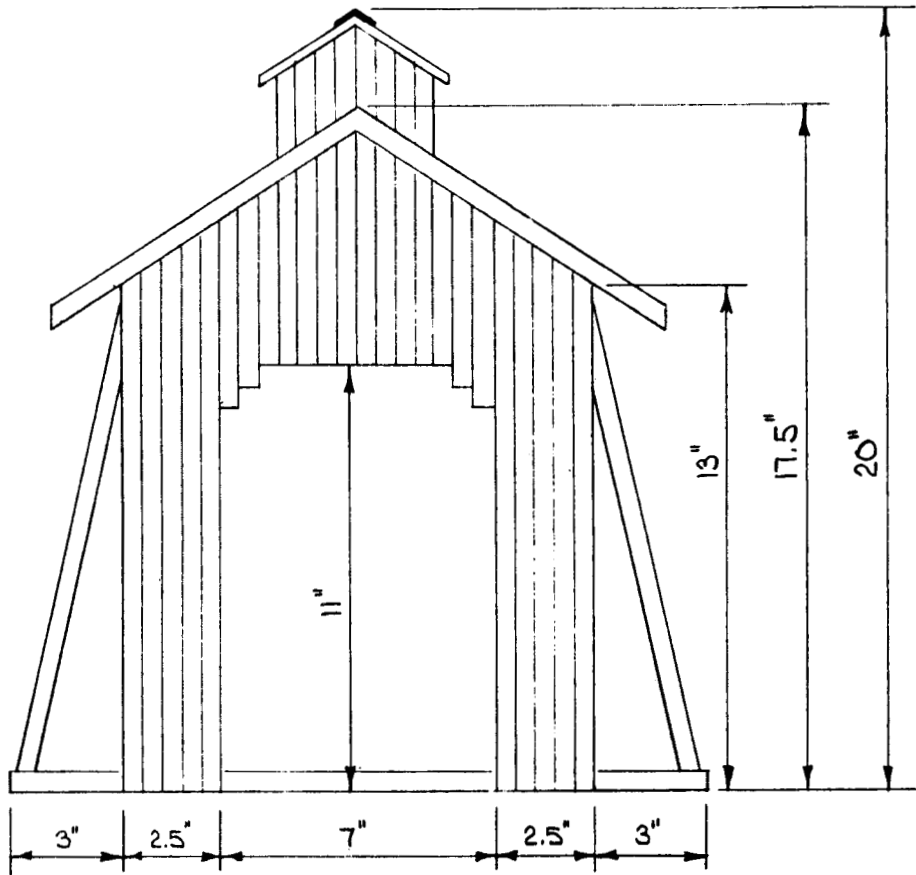




A train enters the covered bridge on Terry Ketcham's Ridgway, Vance Junction, & Southern.



The other end of the bridge. Note the internal bracing and the effective use of landscaping.



With the roof off, the partial internal bracing may be seen. The bracing is for looks only, and occurs only on one side of the bridge.



This square water tower is also one of Mr. Ketcham's creations. Perhaps we will see a write-up on this interesting structure in a future issue of GR.