

March 20, 1962

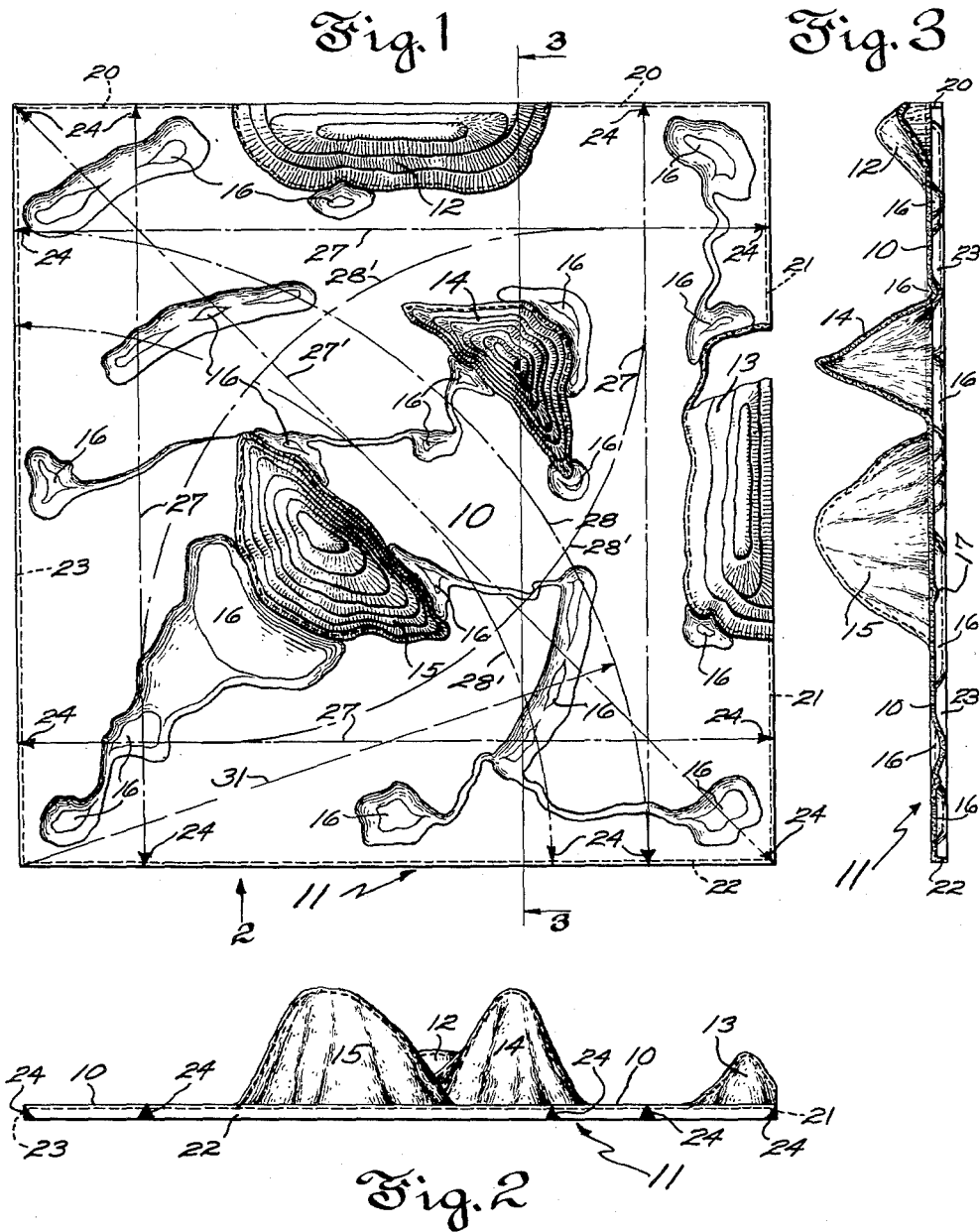
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3,025,626

SCENIC TILES FOR MINIATURE RAILROAD

Filed Oct. 7, 1958

3 Sheets-Sheet 1



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3 Sheets-Sheet 2

Fig. 5

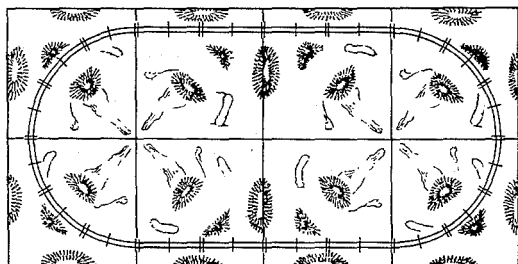
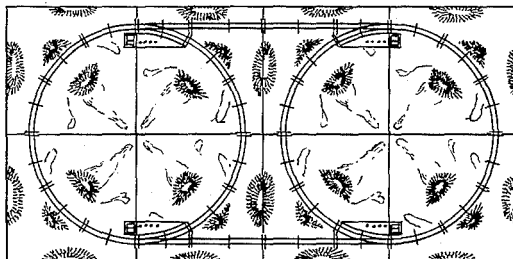


Fig. 4

Fig. 7

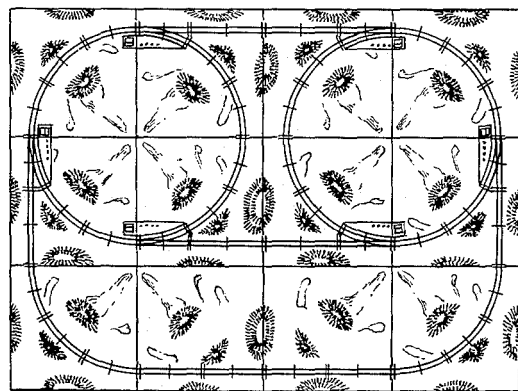
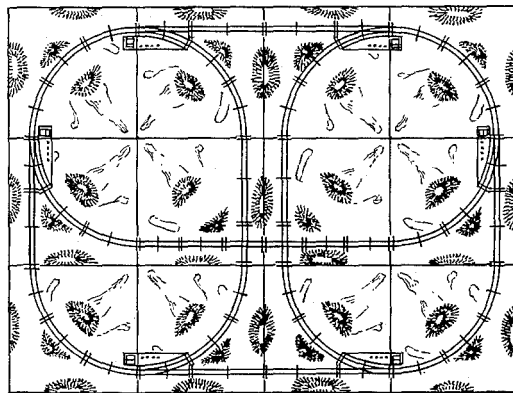


Fig. 6

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3 Sheets-Sheet 3

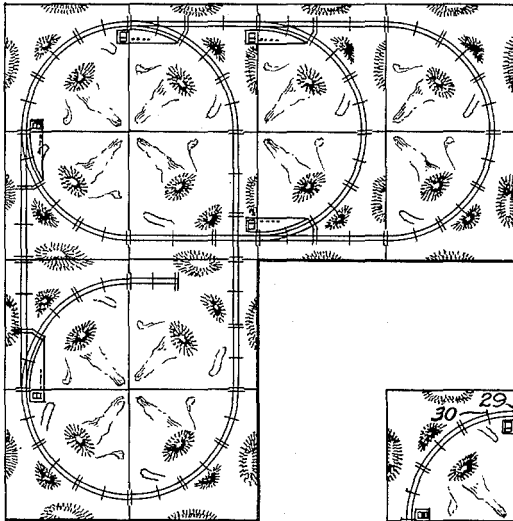


Fig. 10

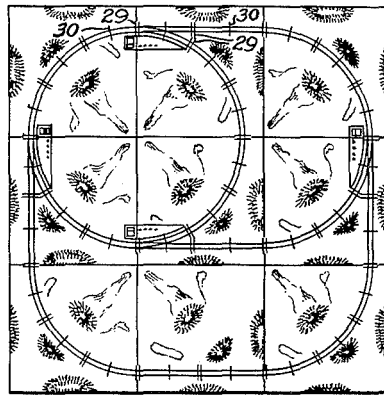


Fig. 9

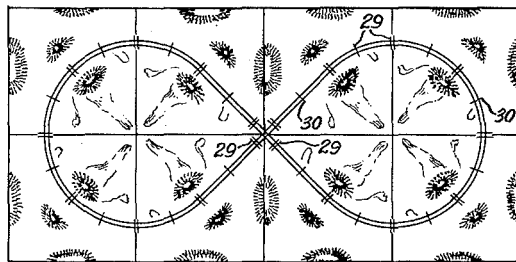


Fig. 11

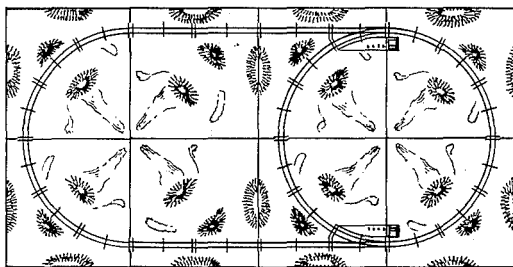


Fig. 8

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1

2

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SCENIC TILES FOR MINIATURE RAILROAD

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11 Claims. (Cl. 41-23)

This invention relates to readily assembled prefabricated units of model scenery or scenic foundations specially adapted to serve as sectional bedwork for sectional toy or model railway track and in which rights-of-way or roadbeds for the track can be varied by a selection of different relationships in which the units can be placed together.

An object of the improvement is to provide children or workers in the hobby of toy or model railroading with a set of inexpensive scenic components which may comprise discrete hollow tiles of sheet material that fit edge-to-edge or border-to-border without requiring permanent attachment to one another.

Another object is to provide such tiles with contours that include upstanding mounds or protuberances representative of hills and mountains as well as depressions representative of lakes, ponds and other waterways, together with courses of relatively level substantially uniplanar bed area therebetween adapted to afford predetermined rights-of-way or roadbeds for toy railroad track, some of which rights-of-way skirt said mountains while others pass therebetween.

Another object is to arrange the mountains in such relative positions that the rights-of-way shall extend to an edge or corner of the tile and open outward from the tile thereat in such positions along the mat edge that more than one right-of-way on a single tile is capable of registering in lengthwise alignment with a choice of the rights-of-way on an adjoining tile, whereby to afford a through-way across adjoining tiles for selective courses of railroad pike.

Another object is to provide each tile with surface markings to indicate possible courses of toy railroad track and especially at the edges or borders of the tile where the intended rights-of-way open outward from the tile for registering interchangeably with a choice of the rights-of-way on adjoining tiles whose points of opening at the edges of the tile are correspondingly indicated for guidance in matching the tiles to accommodate a planned pike of toy railroad.

Another object is to make the tiles in formed-sheet style. One inexpensive lightweight material which lends itself to this purpose is papier-maché embossed or contoured, either by die pressure or a molding, and/or build up pulp depositing, process into a relatively unilevel bed area interrupted by hollow elevations and hollow depressions. The side walls of the elevations which upstand from the bed area together with the side walls of the depressions which extend downward from the bed area render the tile quite stiff and rigid as a unitary body. Such stiffening effect can be augmented by forming irregular shallow furrows and undulations extending in diverse directions in the generally uniplanar bed area of the tile. Stiffness is further promoted at the margins of the tile by the turned-down edge walls.

Another object is to terminate the aforesaid depressions and the downward turned edge walls at a uniplanar level so that the depressions will form multiple supporting legs on which the tile will stably stand without teetering.

Another object is to cause superimposed toy track to appear to course through mountain passes by arranging at least some of the selective rights-of-way to extend between closely neighboring elevations on the tile.

Another object is to locate some of the hollow eleva-

tions at the extreme edges of the tile so that they are in effect sectioned on a vertical plane, the hollows therein opening laterally outward so that similarly sectioned elevations on adjoining tiles can mate to form in appearance a single closed elevation simulating a ridge-like hill or mountain.

The above and further objects and features of the improvement will be understood in fuller particular from the following description of examples of various assembled arrangements of the tiles embodying the invention, such being shown in combination with various layouts of toy railroad track designed to be accommodated on the tiles in accordance with the invention. The description has reference to the appended drawings wherein:

FIGURE 1 is a plan view of a scenic tile embodying the invention and usable in various assembled relationships shown in FIGURES 4-11, inclusive, of the drawings.

FIGURE 2 is an edgewise view of the tile in FIG. 1 looking in the direction of arrow 2.

FIGURE 3 is a view taken in section through the tile of FIGURE 1 on the plane 3-3, looking in the direction of the arrows.

FIGURE 4 shows an assembly of two rows of four tiles on which is removably installed a pike of toy railroad track in simple oval shape.

FIGURE 5 shows a layout of track as in FIGURE 4, having a circular loop of track added at each end of the oval.

FIGURE 6 shows the addition of four tiles to those in FIGURE 5 making three rows of four tiles accommodating a longer course of track lying in outboard relation to the oval course in FIGURE 5.

FIGURE 7 shows interconnected and overlapping oval pikes of track accommodated on an arrangement of tiles like that in FIGURE 6.

FIGURE 8 is like FIGURE 4 with a single circular loop of track added to one end of the oval.

FIGURE 9 is like FIGURE 6 wherein the assembly of tiles is reduced to a square area formed by three rows of three tiles with a single circle of track at one end of the shortened oval.

FIGURE 10 shows a corner-forming layout of the tiles accommodating two angularly related, mutually overlapping ovals of track pike with a half circle of track bridging one oval and a short branch of track dead-ended within the other oval.

FIGURE 11 shows the same layout of tiles as in FIGURE 1 accommodating a figure-8 course of smaller or HO gauge track wherein the radii of curvature of the loops of the track are smaller than the radii of curvature of the trackage shown in the other figures of the drawings.

FIGURES 4-11 of the drawings show assembled groups of tiles embodying the invention, all of which tiles are incidentally alike but assembled in variable edge-to-edge or border-to-border relationship. It is not necessary in practicing the invention that all of the tiles be alike, or that their assembly be patterned after any particular one of the said figures of the drawings.

One such tile, designated 11 as a whole, is shown in detail in FIGS. 1, 2 and 3. It may comprise a plastic or fibrous material such as papier-maché deposited upon or formed between molding patterns, or other preferably lightweight material that is embossible and capable of holding pre-determined preferably hollow shapes and contours imparted to it by forming in a machine press or otherwise embossing.

As an example of configurations embodying the invention the tile is shown to incorporate four preferably hollow mounds or protuberances upstanding from the generally uniplanar bed area 10 of the tile and designated

12, 13, 14 and 15, respectively. Mounds 14 and 15 are contoured to represent natural scenic peaks that are close enough together to make the space between them suggestive of mountain passes. The mounds 12 and 13 are also preferably hollow and formed at the edges of the tile to represent ridges of land or the crests of elongate hills whose hollow interior opens laterally outward from the tile. In FIGS. 4-11 land ridges 12 or 13 on one tile are shown to register with the hollow in a similar ridge 12 or 13 at the edge of an adjoining tile, whereby the laterally opening interiors of both ridges become closed by their two sloping sides which combine to form a composite elevation.

Tile 11 is seen to be provided also with hollow depressions 16 dished downward in the generally uniplanar bed area 10 of the mat. These depressions extend downward to a uniform depth from the bed area 10 so that their lowest reaches or foot surfaces are coplanar, whereby the bottom walls of the depressed portions serve as multiple legs on which the tile may stably stand. The bed area 10 is thus supported in somewhat elevated position above whatever flat support surface the tile may rest upon. Firm support for the bed area 10 is further aided by the turned down side flanges 20, 21, 22 and 23 of the tile, whose bottom edges are coplanar with the foot surfaces of the depressions on which the tile stands.

Thus the down-turned side flanges of the hollow tile and the side walls of both the upstanding hollow mountain peaks and downward dished depressions aid in making the tile virtually rigid against unwanted flexure and distortion even though the sheet-like material of which the tile is made may be of weak soft fibrous nature as papier-mache'. Material of this character imparts to the tile a vibration absorbing and noise silencing property that is highly desirable in a supporting bed work for toy railroads. For still greater stiffening reinforcement of the bed area 10 as well as to improve the resemblance of the top tile surface to mildly hilly land topography, said area can be embossed to form irregular furrows or shallow undulations 17 extending in diverse directions to represent the usual irregularity and lack of flatness of natural terrain. Any or all of the depressions may be covered with glass or equivalent reflective substance or filled with pools of water to enhance the realism of the scenic effect in their resemblance to waterways. For this purpose the surfaces of the tiles may be given a waterproof coating.

In FIGURE 1 there is suggested by broken lines the longitudinal center lines of certain courses or roadbeds for toy railroad track among many other possible courses that can be accommodated along the pre-determined rights-of-way or roadbeds afforded across the bed areas 10 of adjoining tiles by the contours thereof. Some of these rights-of-ways are straight and some are curved to accommodate respectively straight sections 27 or curved sections 28 of trackage. In FIGS. 4-11 (illustrated in FIGS. 9 and 11) the junctions between track sections at which the sections may be taken apart are indicated by double cross lines 29. Intermediate these junctions there may be any appropriate number of cross-ties, represented by single spaced cross-lines 30, underlying and supporting the rails of each section as in common toy railroad practice. Each cross-tie is insulated from its track rail.

While the present improvements are not confined to systems of toy track having straight and curved sections of specific dimensions, it is convenient and within the principles of the invention that the tile have a length and width that is an even multiple of the combined lengths of the straight sections of track and that the arrangement of pseudo mountains and hills on the tile provide a course or right-of-way therebetween or therearound for curved sections of track so located as to merge tangentially with straight stretches of track within the area of the tile. A guide to the layout of chosen pikes of toy railroad track will be found in U.S. Patent No. 2,694,864 under common ownership with the present application.

As an illustrative example of use of the present invention each tile of FIG. 1 may measure 24" square. The straight track sections measured along their center lines 27 may be 6" or 8" or 12" long. The curved track along its center line may have a radius of curvature 31 of 20" centered at one corner of the tile and 90 degrees of arcuate extent composed of curved sections of 15 degrees extent or multiple thereof and merging with the straight track of an adjoining tile at the mating edges thereof or at least within the area of the tile which carries the curved track. Other track courses 27', 23' are shown.

If it be desired to avoid or break up any recognizable regularity and repetition of pattern in the appearance of the topography in the bedwork framed by the assembled tiles, any tile shown in FIGS. 4-11 that carries straight track can be turned about to any one of four different positions in relation to its adjoining tiles and still provide a continuing throughway for the straight stretch of a pike of track. This is because the pseudo hills and mountains are not arranged symmetrically with respect to center lines of the tile and yet the straight rights-of-way or roadbeds for track courses 27 are equidistant from the edges of the tile with which they are respectively parallel and they are parallel with each other.

The top surface of the tiles can be treated partially or all over in many ways to enhance the appearance of an aeroview of natural landscape as by the use of asbestos powder mixed with water and water glass solution in equal parts applied with a trowel or putty knife. The mountains may be painted with suitable underlying color and then ornamented with lichen moss glued in place to represent a forested area.

Many variations of the exact sizes, shapes and arrangements of tiles characterized by the principles of this invention will be suggested by the foregoing disclosure, all of which variations coming within a broad interpretation of the wording of the appended claims are intended to be covered by said claims.

What is claimed is:

1. A continuous bedwork of scenic simulating tiles comprising individual tiles each presenting a substantially uniplanar top surface comprising both curved and straight roadbeds adapted to support toy railroad track and flanked by mounds upstanding from said surface to simulate mountains, each of said tiles being substantially rectangular and having four perpendicularly related borders adapted to mate interchangeably with any of the said borders of like tiles, a plurality of said roadbeds on each tile extending to a common border of the same tile in a direction normal to said common border and at like distances from the perpendicularly related borders of the same tile thereby to be alignable interchangeably with different roadbeds of those on any adjacent like tile when the borders of adjacent tiles are placed selectively together.

2. A continuous bedwork as defined in claim 1, in which at least one of the said mounds on each of at least two of the said tiles are located at the said matable borders of the tiles, and each mound has a hollow interior opening laterally outward of the tile, said mounds being of corresponding size and shape to meet and mutually register at their said openings in a manner to close said hollow interiors of the mounds when said tiles are placed border-to-border.

3. A continuous bedwork as defined in claim 1, in which at least three of the said tiles are square.

4. A continuous bedwork as defined in claim 1, in which all of the said tiles are of equal size and square, and the said mounds are positioned unsymmetrically with respect to all center lines of the tile, whereby evenness of composite pattern in the relationship of said mounds on a plurality of the tiles can be avoided by a choice of which borders of adjoining tiles are place together.

5. A continuous bedwork as defined in claim 1, together with separable sections of miniature circularly

5

curved railroad track to be laid on the said roadbeds and having a combined arcuate extent about their center of curvature aggregating an angle of ninety degrees, said arcuate extent terminating at the edge of at least one of the said tiles.

6. A continuous bedwork as defined in claim 1, together with separable sections of miniature circularly curved railroad track to be laid on the said roadbeds and having a combined arcuate extent about their center of curvature aggregating an angle of one hundred eighty

7. A continuous bedwork as defined in claim 1, together with separable straight sections of miniature railroad track resting on the said straight roadbeds of the said tiles, said straight track sections on a single tile having a combined length equal to the edge-to-edge dimension of said single tile, and separable sections of miniature curved railroad track resting on the said curved roadbeds, said curved roadbeds merging tangentially with the said straight roadbeds within the surface area of said single tile.

8. A continuous bedwork as defined in claim 1, in which at least two of the said straight roadbeds on respectively adjacent tiles rest on the said uniplanar top surface of said adjacent tiles between the said mounds and meet in straight alignment at a common corner meeting point of four mutually adjacent like tiles.

9. A continuous bedwork as defined in claim 1, together with markings on the said surfaces of the said tiles at the said borders thereof indicating the spots at which the said roadbeds meet the said borders of the tiles

6

thereby to serve as a guide in placing together adjacent tiles in a manner to bring a choice of roadbeds on said tiles into mutual alignment.

10. A continuous bedwork as defined in claim 1, together with depressions dished downward from the said uniplanar surface to a sufficient common depth therebelow to provide feet on which the said tile can stably stand, whereby to support the said roadbeds in elevated position above and parallel with a flat means of support on which the tile may rest.

11. A continuous bedwork as defined in claim 10, together with downward directed flanges at the said borders of the said tiles extending downward from the said uniplanar surface to a depth substantially equal to the said depth of the said depressions, whereby to assist in the stable support of said tiles in uniplanar surface alignment.

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