



IrwinsJournal.com Presents:

The Unofficial Micro-Trains® Release Report

Issue #203 – November, 2013

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Hello again everyone! November brings the start of Heating Season here at UMTRR HQ, and more of a desire to stay home... well, except for train shows that is. We're back from some now-rare back-to-back travel weeks (not that I'm complaining about this!) and ready to take the usual look behind the red and yellow sign. We begin with a body style that has rarely if ever led off these bytes...

N SCALE NEW RELEASES:



035 00 161 and 035 00 162, \$27.30 each

Reporting Marks: CP 277095 and 277193.

40 Foot Despatch Stock Car, CP Rail.

White with Action Red band at top of sides. Action Red ends and roof. White CP Rail roadname on red placard at top left. White reporting marks and black dimensional data

on placard at top right. Approximate Time Period: 1968 (paint date) to early 1990s.

We start this month with a virtual two-pack of a modified 035 body style. Normally the lettering on MTL's Despatch Stock Car is squeezed into the center of the panels (see the Z Scale SP stock car below for an example). But that won't do for this car, as the lettering is all at the top in the Action Red band, avoiding the bottom two-thirds of the car. Micro-Trains explains why: that part of the car is "painted white to camouflage the lime spray that was used to disinfect the cars after cleaning." Of course, that means that any weathering of the earlier CP stock cars—and most other stock cars for that matter—should include plenty of white overspray.

The **Canadian Pacific Color Guide to Freight and Passenger Equipment**, Page 63, provides a 1992 photo of sister car CP 277111. According to the caption this was one of 45 cars "equipped with a semi-permanent steel deck, conventional sliding doors for the lower deck and two-piece sliding doors for the upper deck." You might imagine that this makes the 035 body style a stand-in, and I couldn't fault you for that. (I might also imagine that you're tired of me noted that said 035 body style is based on a New York Central prototype.) There are also differences in the side sills and ends; however what I think is the key spotting feature, namely the high level lettering placards, helps to make this car a better looking fit than it would have been otherwise. Online examples of this car series are available at the Canadian Freight Car Gallery, including CP 277192 which is one number away from one of MTL's two chosen cars. Shot in 1985, the car's sides look more gray than white, which might have been

from weathering. There's also a view of CP 277172 from 1987, which carried the previous Canadian Pacific lettering on a brown band at the top of the car. This image shows both that the prior brown CP and Action Red CP Rail paint schemes co-existed for this series and that the decision to go with white paint for most of the sides of the car was made before the decision to switch to Action Red. But I also hasten to add that some of these cars appear to have gray and not white as the color of the bottom two-thirds of the car. It could be that this gray very quickly was covered with the white of the lime disinfectant, yielding what's shown in other photos. Or it could be that the original color really was white as depicted by MTL.

Ian Cranstone's "Canadian Freight Cars" website (www.nakina.net) has two hundred of these cars built new with steel frames by Canadian Car and Foundry in 1958, relatively late for stock cars. Cranstone has these lasting until 1993.

Given that, we'll pull a sample listing from the Official Railway Equipment Register (ORER). The April 1970 edition will do; it shows 193 cars in the series 277000 to 277199. The inside length was 40 feet 6 inches, inside width 9 feet 1 inch, inside height 10 feet 6 inches, outside length 44 feet 4 inches, extreme height 15 feet 1 inch, door opening 6 feet, and capacity 3863 cubic feet or 120,000 pounds. I suspect that the weight capacity wasn't met very frequently.



039 00 240, \$27.20

Reporting Marks: G.R.Y.X. 1018.

40 Foot Wood Double Sheathed Boxcar, Single Door, Empire Fuel.

Yellow sides, black roof and ends. Multicolor lettering on left including reporting marks and large slanted "Empire Fuel" on left. Door has

outline map of the State of Iowa with legend "The Home of 8000 Friendly People" in black followed by "and Empire Dustless Fuel" and company name and location (Empire Fuel Company, Centerville, Iowa). Multicolor depiction of the (or one) Empire Dustless Fuel plant on right, with insets in yellow for black dimensional data. Simulated black hatches included to be mounted to roof by the modeler. Approximate Time Period: early 1930s. *Note:* MTL has announced a delay of this car to mid-month, which should put it in stores by the time you're reading this.

A large majority of wood double sheathed boxcars are brown with sometimes quite minimal white lettering. It's a vast understatement to say that this doesn't fit that standard!

The June 10, 1948 edition of the **Florence Times Daily** of Florence, Alabama—admittedly quite a ways from Iowa—includes an advertisement for Empire Dustless High Heat Low Ash Stoker Coal. "Entirely free of dust, dirt and fines, this oil treated, double screened stoker fuel is wholly different from raw coal as it comes from the mines. Every pound is uniformly size 1 ¼ [inch] by ½ [inch]. This assures a free flowing stoker fuel that won't clog even when wet." The reader is urged to "Place order now with your favorite coal dealer... if unavailable from him, contact us" with "us" being the DeBardelben Coal Corporation of Birmingham,

Alabama. Which is also a long way from Iowa, although a citation for Empire Fuel in the book "Coal Men of America" makes me think that the enterprise wasn't limited to just one state. In addition, like "Blue Coal" the phrase "Empire Coal" could be a trademark that was licensed or franchised to numerous companies and/or sales territories. We'll leave further research on this to the reader.

And that would be all that's available through the first few pages of search results for this company... that is, until one comes across Rob Adams' website for the Keokuk and Western Railroad (keokukandwesternrr.com , no "www"). The K&W became the Centerville Division of the Chicago, Burlington & Quincy (aka the Burlington Route) and ran roughly westward from Keokuk through northern Missouri and Southern Iowa to Centerville and connection with the Rock Island, then continued to Van Wert and then Des Moines and Cainsville, Missouri via a second subsidiary. This would all be interesting, but what makes this website important is a prototype photo of this exact car on the site's "Models" page. It's none other than noted N Scale expert (and UMTRR Gang Member) Charlie Vlk who provided this image from the Grace Tank Car Lines for the K&W site. The depiction of the Empire plant on the real car is more like a mural than a photograph, and it really does cover most of the side of the car right of the door. There's a service date of 1931, one grab iron on the left of the side, and grab irons instead of a ladder at the right of the side... and the hatches, just as MTL provides for the modeler. In short, this is an unusual car and it appears to be well executed on the 039 body style.

The GRYX reporting marks stand for Grace Car Line, as is strongly hinted in the photo credit on the K&W website. However, by the July 1935 ORER, the John H. Grace Company which has those GRYX reporting marks also really has only tank cars, and uses only road numbers up to 830. So much for GRYX 1018, and so much for an ATP that even gets us through the decade of the thirties. Meanwhile, the February 1931 ORER doesn't show that car either. We could be looking at a short window for the prototype car, but given its attractiveness, I believe that won't be a consideration for most N Scalers.

But wait, there's more! While I was doing my own research for this car, Charlie Vlk sent along this account (start quote):

"I posted this picture on the Steam Era Freight Cars List [YahooGroup] a couple of years ago (at right). I got an inquiry from Joe at Micro-Trains asking if I knew what the colors were as they were going to do the car.



"I was at Des Plaines Hobbies a number of years ago and a guy came in with some N Scale to be repaired. In talking to him I found out that it was Stan Grace. His grandfather started Grace Tank Car Lines in the early 1920s and bought used cars, fixed them up and leased them to small shippers. I went over to his house and interviewed him and borrowed photo albums in which were some non-tank cars which the company was involved with brokering or operating. There were no details about the GRYX 1018 and a search of the 1920 and 1925

ORER does not show any non-tank car or car with similar numbers. Stan's dad and uncle took over the business and when Stan retired in 2002 he sold it to TransAmerica (if I recall correctly) who discontinued the use of the GRYX reporting marks.

"The Micro-Trains description states the car was a refrigerator car....it is not. It is a car similar to the USRA double sheathed box car but with roof hatches applied a little offset of centered on the body each side of the center door, presumably for loading loose coal. It is not known if the car was actually used in service although the complete stenciling and added roof hatches suggests that was at least the intention at some point. The Micro-Trains body is a pretty close representation of the actual car.

"No information on the colors was found but the Micro-Trains graphic artist did a great job and rendered the mural pretty much as I guessed it was. Pictures of the plant show it looked pretty much like the rendering on the photo of the 1018.

"I saw that MTL has provided some laser-cut hatches to install on the roof. I would remove the rib on the roof above the 'E' in 'DUSTLESS,' fourth rib from the end, and the same rib on the other end of the car, to provide a flat surface to glue the hatch onto. The hinge side goes towards the ends of the car. A small chunk of styrene should be glued on the centerline of the hatch about over the 'U' in 'DUSTLESS' as a rest for the hatch when opened. The roof on the prototype was a board roof with no seams."

Thanks, Charlie, for a great look at the backstory for this car. I suspect that it won't be gathering any dust at the MTL factory either! You've been cautioned...



046 00 420, \$23.60

Reporting Marks: WM 5446.

50 Foot Steel Gondola, Fishbelly Sides, Drop Ends, Western Maryland.

Oxide red including trucks and couplers (but not wheels). Mostly white lettering including reporting marks on left, and speed lettering roadname in center and legend "Drop Bottom Container Car" at bottom center. Black and white consolidated stencils on right. Simulated coke container load included. Approximate Time Period: late 1950s to late 1980s (remove consolidated stencils for mid-1970s and before).

We'll refer to the **Western Maryland Color Guide to Freight and Passenger Equipment**, which hasn't been opened in a while here at UMTRR HQ, for the story of this and similar WM cars. Between 1957 and 1961, the line's company shops converted gondolas from the series WM 54001 to 54460 built in 1951 by Bethlehem Steel into these cars. The cars were labeled either "Flow Control Container Car" or "Drop Bottom Container Car." The floors were modified to enable use of Youngstown drop-bottom containers for less-than-carload bulk material. Either eight or ten containers could be carried. Externally, these apparently didn't look any different from standard gondolas, unless you got a look at the floor. The Color Guide includes a shot of just that from above, on Page 52. On Page 51 there's a bingo —

a photo of the exact road number—for the WM 5446. Indeed, the prototype car is a fourteen-panel drop-end car. The image was captured in 1987 so the use of consolidated stencils is accurate for that time. Removing those should result in an easy backdate. The side of the car photographed doesn't have the side mount brake wheel, however other cars taken for this use do have that feature so it's probably safe to assume that the real WM 5446 had side mount brake wheels as well, matching the 046 body style.

The load, though, is a bit of a stand in. The WM had closed bulk containers which were each half the width of the gondola. They were painted and lettered (!) and included some limited dimensional data, for example, 145 cubic feet. The MTL load is eleven containers across, more than the ten capacity called out in the Color Guide, and are, well, let's call them generic. It would be an interesting project to model the actual boxes used by the Western Maryland. The photos in the Color Guide show that the gondolas weren't necessarily completely filled with containers; for instance the 5446 has four on the left end and four more on the right end, two rows of two containers each respectively.

The ORER for July 1963 shows some small groups of former WM gondolas reclassified as "Container" cars with AAR Designation LG. The set in which we're most interested is numbered 5441 to 5447, for a total of seven cars. The inside length of these cars was 52 feet 6 inches, inside width 9 feet 6 inches, inside height 3 feet 6 inches, outside length 54 feet 7 inches, extreme height 7 feet 2 inches, and capacity 140,000 pounds. An end note common to all of the groups of container cars calls out the cubic capacity of each car. This list doesn't align with the series of cars in the registration, just to make things more confusing. For example, cars 5431 to 5444 had ten containers adding to a capacity of 1450 cubic feet and cars 5445 to 5447 had eight containers adding to a capacity of 1160 cubic feet. I also interpret this information to mean that the containers did not fill the entire car, just as they're shown in the Color Guide. I also note that these groups of Container cars are numbered to be smack in the middle of the WM's cement hopper cars.

We know from the photos in the Color Guide that we can skip a couple of decades' worth of ORERs from there, so we'll stop at the July 1987 Equipment Register. The Western Maryland's cars are shown under the Chesapeake and Ohio's registration. (There's also a CSX Transportation entry, but that has only the Seaboard System's equipment—full ORER consolidation was yet to come.) While the cars 5441 to 5444 are shown, the 5446 is not—and there's only one car in the "series" 5441 to 5444 anyway. I'll be lazy here and declare the end of the Approximate Time Period to be the late eighties.



049 00 680, \$26.95

Reporting Marks: SNBX 4601.

40 Foot Wood Double Sheathed Refrigerator Car, Vertical Brake Staff, Fishbelly Underframe, Century Beer (Schneider Brewing Company).

Green sides, brown ends, roof, door and door sill.

Black underframe and hardware. Black lettering including "The Beer of Quality" and reporting marks on right. Multicolor Century Beer trademark on left. End markings in white. Approximate Time Period: 1933 to mid-1930s. Release #7 in an expected twelve in the Brewery Reefer Series.

How many times has this particular car been released in N Scale? I can think of four times, longest ago by Con-Cor and most recently by Atlas. It's also been done by Kadee in 1977 with road number 4600, reprinted with road number 4604 in April 1990 by Micro-Trains, both of which are in my accumulation for easy comparison purposes. Does that make this car a "not a new release" by the UMTRR Operational Definition? It depends...

First, this car is done for the first time on the 049 body style with vertical brake staff and fishbelly underframe, while the first two were done on the 47000/047 body style with horizontal brake staff and straight underframe. This time, the ladders, grab irons and door hardware are in black and the door is brown. The Century Beer logo is also more detailed with a number of different colors, including a gold background that isn't used on the rest of the side of the car. On the previous runs, the logo has the same shade of green on the background. And as for the first run, it didn't even have end markings... well, 1977 was a while ago, even though I'd care not to admit that.

The changes add up to what appears to be a closer depiction of the actual Century Beer car, when compared against the photo in the usual reference: the book **Billboard Refrigerator Cars**, Page 175. Yes, it's only a black and white photo, but authors Richard Hendrickson and Ed Kaminski were able to describe many of the colors: apple green for the sides and gold for the background of the Century Beer trademark. They also note something I'd already learned: the Schneider Brewing Company of Trinidad, Colorado only leased two cars from Burlington Refrigerator Express. This certainly limits reprint possibilities. (It also most likely means that MTL's 1990 reprint road number 4604 isn't prototypical.) By the time of this lease, which took place toward the end of the Billboard Refrigerator time period, Burlington Refrigerator Express was being operated by Fruit Growers Express. FGE established the National Car Company as a leasing subsidiary in the 1930s but that made them late to the game of providing colorful cars to companies.

There's still an active firm in Germany called Schneider Brewing so teasing out search results for the concern we want is a bit of a challenge. A website that documents the historic buildings of Trinidad, Colorado (www.folsomvillage.com) states, "Surely one of the most interesting and unique buildings in Trinidad is the old Schneider Brewery at 240 North Convent Street. This building which was completed in 1888 is in the Tuscan or Italian hill style of architecture. This structure was both well-conceived and well executed and remains

almost unchanged and undamaged after more than 80 years of use.” It’s also noted that Schneider was a major developer of the south-central Colorado town. It dealt in real estate and supplied hot water to other buildings. According to TavernTrove.com the firm was known as Henry Schneider from 1873 to 1889, then Ph. Schneider from 1889 to 1892, and finally Ph. Schneider from 1890 to 1951. It was shut down by state and then national prohibition from 1916 to 1933 but made non-alcoholic beverages from 1920 to 1933. The firm was purchased by the Walter Brewing Company of Pueblo in 1944. The brewery was operated under several different companies from 1951 to 1957, including another short turn as Schneider Brewing, but closed for good in 1957. Besides the Century Beer brand, the company also made Silver State Beer, Hawks Beer, and how about this: Zephyr Beer, from 1935 to 1940.



065 00 740, \$26.95

Reporting Marks: WRNX 204.

39 Foot Single Dome Tank Car, Warren Petroleum Company.

Silver and black tank with black underframe and trucks and green dome. Large green “Warren” in capital letters in center. Reporting marks in black on left. White lettering on black portion of tank and white “W” trademark on dome. Approximate Time Period: 1948 (build date given by MTL) to late 1950s. Release #2 of an expected twelve in the Tank Car Series. New release, but a similar paint scheme was done as a Special Run in 2003 for the N Scale Collector in the “Oklahoma Oil” series (NSC Number 03-15).

William Kelly Warren has a connection to the rail industry, other than the tank cars that is: he worked for a railroad in Depew and Shamrock, Texas... for five days. “He could not resist the lure of the oil fields,” reports the Oklahoma State Digital Library. After gaining experience with several different oil companies, he struck out on his own in 1922. The Warren Petroleum Company started in Tulsa, Oklahoma with he and his wife as employees and three hundred dollars in the bank. The company, which focused on liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) and gasoline through the purchase of plants. By 1925 Warren owned the output of thirty-one of those plants, and by 1929 that was fifty plants. “By 1953 one of the largest producers and marketers of natural gasoline and LPG in the world, the company had more than two thousand employees, six shipping terminals in Texas, New Jersey, Florida, and Alabama, LPG plants in Oklahoma, Texas, New Mexico, Illinois, and Indiana, and the world’s largest privately owned fleet of railroad tank cars.” Warren sold out to Gulf Oil in 1953, the largest deal in the energy industry at that time.

One could roughly equate the Approximate Time Period of the company with that of the tank car, but of course that would be too easy. And just to make things interesting, Gulf Oil assigned its own tank car fleet to Warren in the 1960s and 1970s according to Richard Hendrickson writing in the July 1997 issue of **Rail Model Journal**. Hendrickson also noted in the July 2003 issue of RMJ that “Warren cars were routed to almost every part of North America” and calls out their pioneering of rail shipments of LPG. That July 2003 article was accompanied by a photo of an 11,000 gallon Warren tank car painted similarly to the MTL

model, but with the large company name in black. (That image would be the basis for the Atlas car in several scales, to be specific.) So how about the large company name in green?

We of course will not get that kind of data from the ORER, but we do see in the July 1950 ORER the series of insulated tank cars WRNX 200 to 1995 with no car count. These had a capacity of 8000 gallons or 80,000 pounds. They were class ICC 104 and had AAR Mechanical Designation TMI. No, that doesn't mean Too Much Information! (Actually, I think there's too little information on tank cars in the ORER, but that's another story.) TMI is described as "Tank car equipped with container of A.R.A. or A.A.R. Specification I, II, III, III Experimental Welded Seams, IV, 203, 203-W, 203-X or I.C.C. Specification 103, 103-W, 104, 104-W, or Specification Emergency USG-A, USG-B or USG-C" which is insulated. Micro-Trains' car copy states that the Warren car was built by American Car & Foundry in 1948.

Warren had 2246 cars in its roster at that time and 3800 cars in the January 1953 Equipment Register, the last I have before the company was purchased by Gulf Oil. In January 1955 that was up to 4300 cars and in January 1959 up again to 4700 cars. The July 1963 ORER no longer lists the 200 to 1995 series under Warren although the listing for the company remains right through the 1960s. (I stopped looking after 1970.) It's known that there was a renumbering of Warren cars following the acquisition by Gulf. So the ATP for this particular car as numbered ends between 1959 and 1963. We'll just call it at the late 1950s.

I didn't come up with any specific photo references to this exact car in the UMTRR Research Accumulation. So while I put tank car photo guides on my Christmas wish list, we can put together a number of data points through a search of the Steam Era Freight Cars List over on YahooGroups. Here we go: First, per a post by Gary Laakso, at about the 14 minute mark of a film called "Rock Island : Wheels of Progress" there are a pair of Warren tank cars that appear to align with the MTL models. (The film is on YouTube: look for "Rare Freight Car Film (111235).") Second, Tony Thompson referenced his own article in the July 2011 issue of **Railroad Model Craftsman** which includes a 1943 builders' photo of an AC&F car built and painted for Warren. Next, we have a reference by Jerry Glow to his own decal sets, and...bingo, there is the 204 as a sample, in the MTL-depicted paint scheme. The key item from there is that the car is lettered in the small print on the right as being for LPG only. On the other hand, a circa 1996 release of an HO craftsman kit from Sunshine Models includes lettering "Natural Gasoline Only" on the WRNX 200, probably from the same series. It's noted in the sales flyer (direct URL sunshinekits.com/sunimages/sun36b.pdf) that the last 500 cars of the 8000 gallon type were bought by Warren in 1948; "an enormous purchase [that] introduced metal walkways" according to Sunshine Models. Finally, and perhaps most importantly, it's noted on the STFMC YahooGroup that the top part of most Warren tank cars wasn't silver or aluminum painted, but gray. And that, folks, is a lot of references considering that I don't have any references here at the house!



099 00 150, \$21.85

Reporting Marks: TPW 18245.

Three Bay Evans Covered Hopper, Toledo, Peoria and Western.

Red ("lobster red" according to MTL) with mostly white lettering including reporting marks on left and large stylized initials herald on right. Approximate Time Period: 1977 (build date given by MTL) to early 1980s.

This car is among those purchased by the Toledo, Peoria and Western during the period in which it was jointly owned by the Pennsylvania Railroad and the Santa Fe. It's easy to see that neither road had any influence on the paint scheme used by the TP&W. Micro-Trains calls this paint "lobster red" and I suppose they're not wrong there.

The ORER for January 1978 shows the series of 100 cars numbered 18201 to 18300, with these dimensions: inside length 54 feet 1 inch, outside length 58 feet 9 inches, extreme height 15 feet 1 inch, and capacity 4780 cubic feet or 200,000 pounds. The Santa Fe bought out the Pennsy's share of the line in 1979 and merged the TP&W on the last day of 1983. By the April 1984 Equipment Register there are just ten cars left of the original hundred. The TP&W's equipment wasn't much more than a rounding error among ATSF's more than 57,000 cars.

In 1989 the Lomax to Peoria to Logansport line was spun back out to investors, who reclaimed the TP&W name as well. The line had returned to an independent registration in the October 1991 ORER, but with a mere 25 open hoppers, confirming for me that the bright red covered hoppers were from the pre-ATSF merger period. The "new" TP&W did eventually pick up some covered hoppers, but they were numbered in the 200s, and by 2004 the entire freight car roster- such as it was- had gone completely missing from the ORER. Today the TP&W is part of the Genesee and Wyoming empire, having come into the fold via G&W's 2012 purchase of RailAmerica, which had itself bought the line in 1999.

The first photo I located of a TP&W covered hopper from the 18200s, specifically, the 18274, is on the website RRPictureArchives.net. It looks like the service date is August 1982, which would make it one of the last cars in the group. The familiar 5-4-5 rib pattern is there, as is the outline map symbol of the United States Railway Equipment Corporation (down below the "W" in the herald). That USRE mark is a possible clue that this series of cars was leased, and the Santa Fe elected to return the cars to the lessor following its pickup of the "Tip-Up."



108 00 240, \$24.90

Reporting Marks: B&O 187114.

100 Ton Three Bay Open Hopper, Baltimore & Ohio / Chessie System.

Black with mostly yellow lettering including "Chessie System" at top left, reporting marks at left and "Ches-C" herald on right. Simulated coal load included. Approximate Time Period: 1977 (build date given by MTL) or 1978 (build date given in **Chessie System Color Guide to Freight Equipment**) to late 1980s.

“Located just east of the massive coal marshaling yard at Russell, Kentucky, the Chesapeake & Ohio’s Raceland Shops was (and still is) one of the largest railroad shops of its type in the world,” author Randall K. Fields notes in the **Chessie System Color Guide to Freight Equipment**. Among the thousands of hoppers turned out over decades of car building was the Chessie System’s class H-48A for the Chessie’s subsidiaries Western Maryland and Baltimore & Ohio. The H-48A cars differed from their predecessors in having single panel side sheets; the H-48s needed two panels riveted together due to a steel shortage at the time they were built. The B&O’s share of the H-48A cars included the series 186000 to 187999, which includes the car that MTL has produced. The Color Guide has only WM cars for photo references, but they’ll do to point out that the MTL 108 body style is in general alignment with the prototype. One delta is the use of a ladder on the left end of the sides of the real H-48As versus very long grab irons on the Micro-Trains car. Photos of other B&O / Chessie System hoppers, and C&O ones for that matter, confirm that the ampersand in the reporting marks is split by the second rib from the left. It’s correct, but it’s a bit strange-looking.

The ORER for July 1980 shows the aforementioned series B&O 186000 to 187999 at a total of 1906 cars. The inside length was 45 feet, outside length 48 feet 9 inches, extreme height 12 feet 3 inches, and capacity 3432 cubic feet or 200,000 pounds. It’s noted in the Color Guide that these metrics fall within Plate B dimensions. From there, I think the ATP is just a question of how long these cars remained in the original paint before being redone or simply restenciled for CSX Transportation. The July 1989 ORER shows a total of 113 cars still in B&O reporting marks; that’s down to 215 in April 1995 and just four in July 1998.



112 00 530, \$24.90

Reporting Marks: TTBX 940772.

89 Foot Bi-Level Open Auto Rack with Vandal Panels, Trailer Train/Erie Lackawanna.

Flat car is yellow with black and white lettering including reporting marks (white on black panel) on left and “Trailer Train” (same way) on right. Auto rack is brown with white decking and brown placard with EL herald and roadname. Approximate Time Period: 1970s and 1980s. Etched stainless steel vandal panels are to be installed by the modeler (this is what’s meant by “car comes unassembled” in the announcement). This release is a joint venture of Micro-Trains and Eastern Seaboard Models.

Pre-orders were taken for this car in July 2013. Please see the July 2013 UMTRR for coverage of this item.

N SCALE REPRINTS:



055 00 180, \$23.85

Reporting Marks: SL-SF 90950.

33 Foot Two Bay Open Hopper, Offset Sides, Flat Ends, St. Louis-San Francisco ("Frisco").

Brown (including trucks and couplers) with white lettering including reporting marks on left. White on black "coonskin" herald in center. Simulated coal load included. Approximate Time Period: 1949 (build date) or 1963 (service date) to early 1980s. Previous Release (as Catalog Number 55180): Road Number 91735, March 1984.

Is the change from black to brown trucks sufficient to declare this run a "not a reprint"? Perhaps, but the dimensional data also differs between the release and the original run done by Kadee Micro-Trains in 1984, and this version of the car doesn't have the lines above and below the reporting marks either. I think that earns the "+" sign denoting the "Not A Reprint" in the UMTRR website listings.

The **Frisco/Katy Color Guide to Freight Equipment**, Page 94, provides shots of SL-SF two bay hoppers both with and without the lines above and below the reporting marks. The 90941, from the series 90800 to 91599 built in 1949 by Mount Vernon Car Shops, is the one in which we're more interested (the other car is SL-SF 92293 found in 1968). We certainly have at least a decent match between the prototype car and the 055 body style, with respect to rivet patterns, top stiffener ribs (the 4-1-4 pattern) and the use of grab irons. The lettering next to the capacity sure looks like "FW" to me on the prototype photo. That had better not be the AAR Designation, or the Frisco itself made an "oops." Note my use of the split start for the Approximate Time Period given the July 1963 service date clearly visible on the MTL model.

The ORER for July 1953 correctly shows HM as the AAR Designation for these cars, described as "Hopper, Self-Clearing, All Steel" with 798 of the possible 800 cars in service at the time. The inside length was 33 feet, outside length 34 feet, extreme height 10 feet 9 inches, and capacity 2145 cubic feet "level full" or 110,000 pounds. Since I was aware that some of these cars made it to the takeover of the Frisco by the Burlington Northern, I jumped all the way to the July 1980 Register. Within a combined series 90808 to 92897 (which includes the original road number done in 1984), there remained 101 hoppers. But there was just one left in the BN listing in the April 1984 ORER.

The only thing that I find a bit curious in the caption accompanying the 90941 in the Color Guide is this: "At some stage these hoppers received the large black background coonskin herald..." Considering that the Frisco dropped the "Lines" from its previous version of this logo in 1947, which is to say before the 1949 build date of these cars, wouldn't what MTL chose actually be the "as delivered" paint scheme?

Oh, by the way, my first official reference from **Railroad Car Journals** is also on this hopper. Issue #3, Page 11, has a shot of SL-SF 90910 in the paint scheme that MTL selected.



083 00 040, \$20.75

Reporting Marks: NP 53250.

40 Foot General Service Drop Bottom Gondola, Northern Pacific.

Black with white lettering including reporting marks on left, roadname in center, and repeat of road number on right. Simulated gravel load included. Approximate Time Period: 1936 to mid-1970s. Previous Releases: Road Numbers 53035 and 53200, May 2008.

The **Northern Pacific Color Guide to Freight and Passenger Equipment** attempts to answer the first question I had with respect to these cars: why are the road numbers painted on twice? "That... may have been a result of historical practice," writes author Todd Sullivan, "[as] many freight cars of the 19th Century placed the number on both ends of the side."

But, I would have retorted, other of the NP's cars from the 1930s didn't have the number twice. Sullivan continues, "Another possibility is that these cars were used to haul coal, cinders, gravel, stone, mineral ores and concentrates which dented, dirtied and corroded the car's sides... Perhaps the idea was that at least one number would be legible at all times." Ah, good point there.

The NP 53200, one of the cars in the virtual two-pack first run, is pictured in the Color Guide in a worn, corroded and dirty state as of February 1975 at Madison, Wisconsin. It still has both numbers, both legible. There are some detail differences between model and real, most notably that the prototype car used grab irons instead of ladders on the sides and had two step stirrups instead of the single step that MTL utilized. The number of panels is correct and the ends appear to be similar if not exact. The Bettendorf trucks were under the car even in 1975.

The ORER for January 1940 is the closest I have to the 1936 build date given by Micro-Trains (the same date is reported in the Color Guide). The series of AAR Designation GS cars are described as "Gondola, Flat Bottom, Drop Bottom, Steel" and are numbered from 52000 to 53499. There were 1250 cars in the group at that time. (I still say, "Runner Pack.") The inside length was 41 feet 9 inches, inside height 4 feet 5 inches, inside width 9 feet 6 inches, outside length 43 feet 4 inches, extreme height 9 feet 2 inches, and capacity 1775 cubic feet or 100,000 pounds. Pulling a previous release of this body style from the accumulation we find that its dimensions are fairly close; the MTL model is a little shorter in inside length and a bit too tall in height. Your conclusion from this may vary, of course.

Returning to the ORERs, we know from the Color Guide that the cars lasted until 1975. So I can jump to the Burlington Northern listing from April of that year to find 336 cars still in service in the series 52009 to 53499, fast approaching their fortieth birthday, in fact, at which point they should have been removed from interchange service. Sure enough, they are gone from the April 1981 ORER. I don't think any of these were repainted or relettered for the BN.

N SCALE WEATHERED RELEASES: *The following items were announced a mid-month releases via the Micro-Trains website, the MTL Facebook page, and via the e-mail "Micro-Trains E-Line," all on or about September 14.*



073 44 140, \$25.75

Reporting Marks: CN 542575.

40 Foot Steel Boxcar, Single Door, No Roofwalk, Full Ladders, Canadian National.

Brown with yellow door. White lettering including roadname (English one side, French other side) and reporting marks on left and large "wet noodle" herald on right. Light weathering; extensive graffiti on both sides. Approximate Time Period: late 1970s to late 1990s. Previous Releases: In weathered version as 073 50 140, Road Number 542580, part of the Norfolk Southern Weathered Freight Set (985 51 220), July

2013, then in unweathered version as 073 00 140, Road Number 542321, August 2013. *Note: This item is reported by MTL (via its Facebook page) to have already been sold out and discontinued.*

One more of these CN boxcars and we have a Runner Pack... hey, I wonder if that was the original idea... Anyway, in keeping with a holiday theme, MTL has here a Thanksgiving Graffiti car of sorts. Make that Thanksgiving in the United States, since Canadian Thanksgiving was last month, on October 13. I can just hear the boo-birds out there declaring this release to be a "turkey." (But guess what—it's apparently already sold out!) I suppose that if you don't like the side with that Traditional Thanksgiving Meal making some sort of comment on the holiday, then you could go with the other side, which has... well, I'm not sure what, exactly. I do note that the, ahem, additional decoration goes right over the ladders on both sides of the car, which I believe is another step forward for the MTL artists.

If you're keeping score, this catalog number is different from the first weathered release with this underlying CN paint scheme—yes, I checked since I was also wondering. That version was 073 50 140 and as you probably recall it came with the Norfolk Southern Weathered Set (993 01 260) in August. I'll refer you to either that month's or the September UMTRR for the prototype story of this car. This run gets the usual middle digits **44** since it's a single release, not part of a set.

This also isn't the first Thanksgiving-themed Weathered car... remember the much more timid turkey peering out from behind "scenery" on the Boston & Maine/Guilford boxcar in 2011 (025 44 400)? It's at right for a quick trip not very far down memory lane.





115 44 020, \$25.95

Reporting Marks: FPBX ---- (road number obscured).

65 Foot 100 Ton Log Car, Federal Paper Board Company.

Blue with white lettering including reporting marks on left and company logo in center. Heavy weathering in dark colors all over car. Simulated pulpwood / wood shavings residue on horizontal surfaces of car. Approximate Time Period: early 1980s to early decade of the 2000s. Previous Releases: Road Numbers 194 and 233, August 2013. (Not counting the forthcoming Runner Pack.)

Now this is different! There have been plenty of N Scale cars with loads offered before, but how many cars have been offered with the remains of a load? It took me a little while to find a prototype reference photo for this, but I did. It's not a Federal Paper Board car, but that's not terribly important this time. An image of Georgia-Pacific GPSX 839 can be found on RailcarPhotos.com and clearly shown on the horizontal surfaces is what's left of the cargo it had previously carried. The residue has a fair amount of brown to go with the white on the 839, but it appears to me that Micro-Trains got this extra detail correct.

The following item is in pre-order at present and is NOT currently available. Scheduled delivery is March 2014. UMTRR coverage is being provided ahead of the actual release in order to facilitate pre-order decisions; pre-orders close November 30.



Scheduled March 2014 Release:

993 01 270, \$219.95

United States Military Railroad Weathered Train Set. Expected to consist of the following items (pre-production sample shown above):

- Atlas 4-4-0 "American" Type Steam Locomotive and Tender
- Two Micro-Trains 151 Series 26 Foot Civil War Era Boxcars
- Micro-Trains 153 Series 26 Foot Civil War Era Flat Car with Railroad Tie Load
- Micro-Trains 152 Series 26 Foot Civil War Era Caboose (Converted Boxcar)
- GHQ detail parts: two cannons and twelve crewmen (unpainted).

Loco will be painted in appropriate USMRR colors. Freight cars and caboose will be painted brown with white lettering and moderate weathering. All items will be equipped with link and pin couplers. Catalog numbers and road numbers / names of individual items will be noted upon actual release.

The announcement of this set gives me an excuse to browse through the book **Civil War Railroads** by George B. Abdill. (There are reasonably priced used copies findable with relatively little effort.) On Page 11 of the volume I found a connection to the area in which I now live. Daniel Craig McCallum (1815-1878) was born in Scotland but made Rochester,

New York his home. He was an engineer and architect and rose to division superintendent for the New York and Erie Railroad by 1854. He designed the “Inflexible Arched Truss Bridge” and was President of the McCallum Bridge Company when Uncle Sam came calling. In February 1862, McCallum was appointed Military Director and Superintendent of railroads in the United States. He started as a Colonel but reached the rank of Major General. According to Abdill, McCallum “had sweeping power to take over any railroad or railroad equipment needed to transport troops or military supplies, but managed to operate the necessary lines with little friction. His major problem was to prevent various Union officers from interfering with his trains and telegraph lines, and to force commanders to unload and release empty cars that were badly needed.”

Four of those badly needed cars will be included in this forthcoming Weathered Set. Photos in Civil War Railroads and other images I’ve seen do indicate variations across the boxcar and flat car fleets of the USMRR, but as noted previously, the MTL body styles certainly work just fine. There are also variations on the placement of the lettering, but wherever it is on the car, it would definitely be what we would call “minimalist”: “U.S.M.R.R.” on the left and the road number on the right.

MTL departs from their previous use of the Bachmann “American” steamer to utilizing Atlas’ version of the 4-4-0 for this set. Mark “Spookshow” Peterson gave these locos a grade of “A” in his **N Scale Locomotive Encyclopedia** (www.spookshow.net/locos.html) though he notes that a decoder installation would be a challenge—there’s no space in the tender, where the motor is. The vintage of the prototype for the Atlas model might be a bit late for the Civil War, but I hasten to add that the different Americans employed by the USMRR were hardly consistent in appearance. A 4-4-0 acquired from the Boston and Maine has the pilot wheels so close together that I don’t know how the thing moved!

Bernard Kempinski, who is modeling the U.S. Military Railroad’s line from Aquia to Fredericksburg as of 1863 in 1:48 Scale, has an interesting list on his blog: a listing of the locomotives that the USMRR auctioned off at the end of the war. (Check the August 31, 2013 entry at usmrr.blogspot.com for the image.) All of the locomotives are named, not numbered, and there’s a variety of builders represented in the collection. I wonder what the engine named “Zebra” looked like? In **Civil War Railroads**, it’s noted that the “D.H. Rucker” sold for \$14,150 to the Baltimore and Ohio and the “Genl. Sheridan” sold for a reported \$13,500.

N SCALE RUNNER PACKS: In addition to the below announcement, Runner Pack #82 (993 00 082, \$54.95), four Rio Grande (D&RGW) dispatch stock cars, is now available. UMTRR coverage was in the May 2013 issue. The individual catalog numbers and reporting marks for these items are as follows: 035 51 090, 36404; 035 52 090, 36416; 035 53 090, 36423; 035 54 090, 36425.



The following item is in pre-order at present and is NOT currently available. Scheduled delivery is April 2014. UMTRR coverage is being provided ahead of the actual release in order to facilitate pre-order decisions; pre-orders close November 30.



Scheduled April 2014 Release:

993 00 087, \$99.95

Quantity four of 89 Foot Flat Cars, Trailer Train.

Reporting Marks: TTAX 970261, 970263, 970265, 970267.

Brown with white lettering including reporting marks on left. "Trailer Train" with words split by yellow "TT" right of center. Approximate Time Period: 1968 through early 1980s at least. Previous Releases: As Catalog Number 71010, Road Number 970253, September 1991 (without trailer); as Catalog Number 71013, Road Number 970257, July 1991 (with Vermont Railway trailer); as Catalog Number 71014, Road Number 970255, May 1991 (with Missouri Pacific trailer); as Catalog Number 71015, Road Number 970259, June 1991 (with Western Pacific trailer). Individual catalog numbers in this Runner Pack should be 071 5x 010, subject to confirmation upon release.

Assuming that my "reprint" call is correct, the past releases of this 89 foot TOFC car is, well, a bit confusing. I went with the catalog number order in the Previous Releases list above, which puts the list out of my usual by date sequence. So, for the record, the actual release order was 71014, 71015, 71013 and then 71010, all of which were back in 1991, i.e. twenty-two years ago. Probably time for some more road numbers, although unlike in 1991, there is a fair amount of competition now for N Scale TOFC dollars. At an MSRP of \$99.95, the street price should be pretty attractive.

Sharp-eyed readers will notice that the image representation of this upcoming four pack has the first car with TTX reporting marks and the other three with TTAX reporting marks. The previous runs used TTAX reporting marks (I validated this with the actual models). Which one is right? Time to hit the Research Accumulation...

The first data point we need is that it was back in 1971 – yes, that far back – when Trailer Train switched from brown to yellow as the base color for its flat cars. Since a fleet as vast as theirs wasn't going to be repainted all at once, I think we're easily safe through the decade in terms of the ATP – and beyond, as we'll see in a moment. This data point also puts into the April 1970 ORER, where we find the series TTAX 970000 to 970369, of all 370 possible cars. (And for the record, there are no TTX cars with those road numbers, so TTAX is correct.) The "inside length" of these cars was 89 feet 4 inches, "outside length" 94 feet 8 inches, and capacity 150,000 pounds. The TTX Class for these cars was Ash10a. The end note for TTAX describes the cars as "Flush deck flat cars equipped with movable Foldaway container pedestals, knock-down hitches and bridge plates; for transporting trailers or containers or combinations of both." As of July 1980, this group had grown to 779 cars numbered 970000 to 970803, but I doubt that all were painted brown with white lettering "as delivered."

It's noted online that David Casdorph's book **Freight Car Data** gives 1968 as the start of the build period for these cars. That's confirmed in the March 1992 issue of **Rail Model Journal**, Page 6, which reviews the original MTL cars in this body style and decodes most of the "Ash10a" class as well. The first letter denotes the builder, in this case, American Car and Foundry. The second letter, "s" means a standard deck height and the third letter "h" means the car has hydraulic gear. The final "a" is for "all-purpose" which we've already gleaned from the ORER note on TTAX cars. The RMJ article's Author D. Scott Chatfield also noted that the "A" in TTAX stood for all-purpose which distinguished from the trailer-only TTX flat cars. The article includes a March 1983 image of TTAX 970106 still in the original brown paint though with a yellow bridgeplate. Add an "at least" to the ATP given that image.

N SCALE SPECIAL EDITION RELEASES: There are no new releases in this category this month, but there are two pre-orders being delivered.



021 00 560, \$24.65

Reporting Marks: None.

40 Foot Steel Box Car, Plug Door, "Happy Hanukkah" 2013.

Stained glass motif in multiple colors of blue and green with black and yellow borders on a clear plastic

body shell. Large yellow legend "Happy Hanukkah" across car. Top of nine candles, representing the menorah, across car. Gold ends and roof. Pre-orders were taken for this car in September 2013. Please see the September 2013 UMTRR for coverage of this item. Note that the design has been corrected from the original artwork to show the appropriate number of candles (nine).



993 21 210, \$119.95

Pennsylvania Railroad Vintage Poster Set. Consists of five 60 Foot Double Plug Door Boxcars. Each is painted brown with white lettering including reporting marks on left and Pennsylvania Railroad plain keystone herald on right. Yellow "Cushioned Car" legend left of the herald. Each car also has a multicolor rendition of a vintage Pennsylvania Railroad poster left of the door. The individual catalog and road numbers are as follows: 122 50 019, 90006; 122 50 029, 90025; 122 50 039; 90037; 122 50 049, 90048; 122 50 059, 90061.



Pre-orders were taken for this set in June 2013. Please see the June 2013 UMTRR for coverage. Micro-Trains said that this set would be available mid-month so it should be at dealers as you read this. Images of the actual models are at left; only the preliminary artwork was available when the set was announced.



In addition to the above items, the next two **Ringling Brothers Vintage Wagon Two-Packs** (#9, 470 00 119, at left, and #10, 470 00 129, at right, both \$29.95 per pack) are slated for mid-month release per MTL and should be available as you read this. Pre-orders were taken for both sets in June.



N₁3 SCALE (NARROW GAUGE): No releases this month.

Z SCALE NEW RELEASES:



518 00 270, \$26.95

Reporting Marks: SNBX 4601.

40 Foot Wood Double Sheathed Refrigerator Car, Vertical Brake Staff, Fishbelly Underframe, Century Beer (Schneider Brewing Company).

Green sides, brown ends, roof, door and door sill.

Black underframe and hardware. Black lettering including "The Beer of Quality" and reporting marks on right. Multicolor Century Beer trademark on left. End markings in white. Approximate Time Period: 1933 to mid-1930s. Release #7 in an expected twelve in the Brewery Reefer Series.

Please see the commentary on the N Scale release of this car above (058 00 170). Note that the N Scale version has the more correct 40 fishbelly underframe while the Z Scale version has the straight underframe.



980 01 280, \$134.95 and 980 02 280, \$99.95

Road Numbers: 341 and 345B (will be preceded with "ATSF" in website listings).

F7 Powered A and Powered B Units, Santa Fe (Atchison, Topeka & Santa Fe).

"Yellow bonnet" scheme of silver with yellow nose and stripe back to rear on A-unit, and yellow stripe across bottom of B-unit. Blue stripe in center of nose on A-unit and blue ends on B-unit.

Black roadname in center of A-unit and off-center

of B-unit. Approximate Time Period: 1972 to no later than 1978.

I've read that once the Santa Fe turned over its passenger service to Amtrak in May 1971, its management wanted to disassociate the AT&SF from its former "persona" as the operator of famous trains like the Super Chief as fast as possible. Since many Ordinary Americans

connected the Santa Fe's red and silver F-units with all kinds of passenger travel, one target of this campaign was those units. Thus, the "yellow bonnet."

On the other hand, I've also read that with the Santa Fe looking to change its image, they adopted the blue and yellow paint scheme for its second generation diesels—also called the "yellow bonnet" in some quarters—and the replacement of red with yellow on the F's was just a way of imitating that paint scheme. Some AT&SF F's got blue paint to replace the red as well. And it's been noted that at least one F unit was painted in blue and yellow, aping the 2nd generation power.

And then there's the idea that the yellow paint was adopted for visibility purposes. That's three different accounts of what happened, all without breaking a virtual sweat here at UMTRR HQ. Well, whatever the reason, we can say that the ATP for these units starts at about 1972 and ends with the retirement of these diesels, many of which were rebuilt into CF7's and spent many more useful years on the Santa Fe and elsewhere. In the case of the specific units that MTL chose, the 341(former 341L) became CF7 2468 in March 1977 and the 345B was off the roster at an unspecified date. All available F7s were converted to CF7s by March 1978 so that would be the end of the Approximate Time Period for all possible numbers of "yellow bonnets."

Online photos of examples of these units appear on Fallen Flags, LocoPhotos.com and RRPictureArchives.net; the last of which has a shot of the 347C and 347B coupled together. Those two units, an A/B pair, were kept by the ATSF and went to the California State Railroad Museum. Further looking will doubtless turn up more "yellow bonnets" and some of the variations on the theme that were painted during the short duration of the color scheme.

Z SCALE REPRINTS:



520 00 100, \$22.80

Reporting Marks: SP 73757.

40 Foot Despatch Stock Car, Southern Pacific.

Brown with white lettering including reporting marks split by roadname on left. Reporting marks on door. on right. Approximate Time Period: 1917 into 1950s, but see text. Previous Release: Road Number 73735, August 2000.

"In February 1917, Ralston Steel Company delivered 450 of these class SM cars to Southern Pacific," states MTL in its car copy. So let's start with the April 1928 ORER, where we find the SP series 73349 to 73798, of 449 cars. However, they are 36 feet 8 inches in length which makes the MTL model too long. In Z this is not terribly noticeable, of course. This group accounted for about 10 percent of SP's stock car fleet at the time, which was over 4600 pieces in size. Lee Gautreaux notes on his website (www.railgoat.railfan.net) that these were Class S-40-5, not only for the Southern Pacific but for its subsidiaries. There were also S-40-5s built for the Northwestern Pacific, the Galveston, Harrisburg & San Antonio, the Houston & Texas

Central and even the Southern Pacific de Mexico, in 1915 and 1916. “These single deck stock cars were all built to the same basic design by Ralston in 1915-17 and featured 2596 cubic foot capacity,” Gautreaux adds, and refers us to Tony Thompson’s book **Southern Pacific Freight Cars Volume 1** for more. We don’t have that here at UMTRR HQ.

But we do have an Internet Browser, which takes us to the Westerfield Models, LLC website (URL www.westerfieldmodels.com , replacing the .biz website that the Al Westerfield had when he owned the company). That firm has a model of the S-40-5 stock car, modernized version, and as you might expect with a model that has as its base a New York Central car, the 520 body style is not that close to the Espee prototype. For one thing, there’s a small door on at least one of the wood ends. The phrase “stand in” applies, as does “see text.”

In the January 1940 ORER (the CD-ROM, also a Westerfield product), the series is listed at a length of 38 feet 2 inches, which makes the MTL model closer than it was versus the 1928 version of the car—well, at least lengthwise. There are 447 pieces in the group, which consists in 1940 of three subgroups, two of single deck and one of double deck. The total number of stock cars on the Espee is down to 2,915. By July 1950 there are 353 cars in the series and by January 1959 it’s down to a mere 13 cars.



531 00 021 and 531 00 022, \$21.95 each
Road Numbers: 257152 and 257223 (will be preceded with “PRR” in website listings).

PS-2 Covered Hopper, Two Bay, Pennsylvania Railroad.

Gray with black lettering including large shadow keystone, roadname and road number in center. Approximate Time

Period: 1955 (build date) to early 1980s. Previous Releases: Road Numbers 257128 and 257236, September 2006.

This tidbit from the UMTRR commentary on the original virtual two-pack of these cars is too good to not reprint: Want to know how to paint a freight car? I mean, exactly how to paint a freight car-- specifically, this one? Well, on Rob’s Pennsy Page (pr.railfan.net , no “www”) you can learn precisely how covered hopper painting was done on the Pennsylvania Railroad, courtesy of the “Instructions for Painting Freight Equipment Cars” dated December 1, 1955, one of several editions that’s on the website. The roof received “Asphaltum-Asbestos Compound, Medium Consistency” -- yikes!-- and the sides were painted first with “Synthetic Freight Car Primer” and then “Ready-Mixed Alkali-Resisting Light Gray Freight Car Paint,” two coats, please.

The H34 series were the first of Pennsy’s covered hoppers to be painted in that “Ready-Mixed Alkali-Resisting Light Gray Freight Car Paint” straight away. Prior to that, the choice was “Freight Car Color”—one of any number of shades of oxide red in layman’s terms. (Want to start a fight among “Slobbering Pennsy Fans”? Ask what color “Freight Car Color”

is.) The initial group of H34's was built by Pullman-Standard, but as MTL states, the next group of cars was built by the PRR from kits supplied by P-S. H34b's, c's and d's would follow and there was also a single H34e.

By the time the H34c's arrived on the property in 1957, the paint scheme had changed: still gray with black lettering but in a different arrangement with a smaller keystone, the large roadname moved up, and the road number coupled with PRR reporting marks. However, the scheme depicted by MTL co-existed with later (and in fact earlier "freight car color") rolling stock. There are a number of photos available in print materials dating from 1955 to 1975. For example, the **Pennsylvania Color Guide to Freight and Passenger Equipment, Volume 2**, has the 257128 that MTL modeled in the first run as it appeared in January 1962. A 1975 view of PRR 257056, still in its original paint, appears in the book **Classic Freight Cars Volume 4**. And a very rusty 257659, as of 1979 still in the as delivered paint that's the same although in a later series, can be found on Fallen Flags (www.rr-fallenflags.org).

The photographic evidence suggests a nice long Approximate Time Period, so let's go to the ORERs, starting with the January 1959 issue (I just miss with the January 1955 edition). The description is "Covered Hopper, Self Clearing, Steel" with AAR Classification LO, and the PRR Class H34a is included as is the usual case with this railroad. The 300 cars were numbered 257001 to 257300 and had an inside length of 29 feet 3 inches, inside width of 9 feet 5 inches, outside length of 35 feet 3 inches, extreme height of 13 feet 3 inches, and capacity of 2003 cubic feet or 140,000 pounds. Jumping all the way to the Penn Central registry in April 1970, there were still 290 of the original 300 in service. Moving to the initial Conrail entry in the April 1976 ORER, 198 cars are listed in the Pennsylvania series, 45 of which are of the higher capacity. Just 16 cars were left lettered for the PRR in the April 1981 Register, although that doesn't necessarily mean they were retired: the Conrail series of covered hoppers numbered 876659 to 876844 are listed as H34a's.

Z SCALE WEATHERED RELEASES: *The following item was announced as an "off-cycle" release via the Micro-Trains website, the MTL Facebook page, and via the e-mail "Micro-Trains E-Line," all on or about September 14.*

994 01 090, \$209.95 – Conrail Weathered Train Set. Consists of the following items:



980 51 270, Road Number 1858 (will be preceded with "CR" in website listings).

F7A Powered Diesel Locomotive, Conrail.

Black with white lettering including "CR" reporting marks in center and on nose of A-unit, and road number at rear of each unit.

Numberboards on nose of A-unit. Approximate Time Period: 1976 to 1979. Previous Release in unweathered form: Road Number 1858 (same road number), October 2013.



**507 52 190, Reporting Marks: CR 361098.
50 Foot Steel Boxcar, Plug Door, Conrail.**

Brown with mostly white lettering including reporting marks on left and roadname and “wheel on rail” herald on right. Light weathering; graffiti on one side. Approximate Time Period: late 1970s (repaint date given by MTL) to mid-1990s, but probably without roofwalk. Previous Release in unweathered form: Road Number 361098 (same number), January 2013.



**506 53 250, Reporting Marks: CR 173347 (but could also be CR 173330).
50 Foot Steel Boxcar, Double Youngstown Doors, Conrail.**

Brown with mostly white lettering including roadname and reporting marks on left and large “wheel on rail” herald on right. Light to moderate weathering. Approximate Time Period: mid-1970s to late 1980s, but most likely without a roofwalk. Previous Release in unweathered form: Road Numbers 173330 and 173347, May 2011. *Note: It is possible but not confirmed that either of the two previous road numbers will be included in this set.*



**522 54 220, Reporting Marks: D&H 13886.
50 Foot Steel Fishbelly Side Gondola, Drop Ends, Delaware & Hudson.**

Red with mostly white lettering including reporting marks on left. White and yellow “The D&H” shield herald on right. Approximate Time Period: 1974 (repaint date given by MTL) to mid-1990s. Moderate weathering (enough to change the shade of the body color). Graffiti on one side. Previous Release in unweathered form: Road Number 13886 (same number), December 2012.



**535 55 030, Road Number: 18720 (will be “CR 18720” in website listings).
30 Foot Steel Caboose, Center Cupola, Conrail.**

Blue with mostly white lettering including “can opener” (aka “wheel on rail”) herald running from left to center, and roadname and road number on right. Approximate Time Period: 1976 to the end of the caboose. Previous Releases in unweathered form: as Catalog 14703, Road Number 18738, with Marklin Couplers in June 1985 and with Magne-Matic Couplers in June 1987; then Road Number 18720 (same number as this release), April 2012.

There are some deltas between model and prototype on the individual releases, most notably that the boxcars shouldn’t have roofwalks. I’ll leave it to the reader to check more for more in the specific issues of the UMTRR in which the unweathered cars were reviewed. But the key question I typically ask of these sets—namely, could all of the pieces fit into a train—appears to be a qualified yes. The driving factor is the short ATP for the diesel, which was gone by 1979, but I’d suggest invoking Rule #1 (It’s Your Railroad) on that if necessary.

Z SCALE RUNNER PACKS: In addition to the below announcement, Runner Pack #59 (994 00 059, \$84.95), three Union Pacific streamline passenger dome cars, is now available. UMTRR coverage was in the May 2013 issue. The individual catalog and road numbers are as follows: 551 51 010, 9003; 551 52 010, 9006; 551 53 010, 9012.



The following item is in pre-order at present and is NOT currently available. Scheduled delivery is April 2014. UMTRR coverage is being provided ahead of the actual release of these items in order to facilitate pre-order decisions; pre-orders close November 30.



Scheduled April 2014 Release:

994 00 064, \$84.95

Quantity three of Union Pacific streamline passenger dome cars.

Road Numbers: 5564, 5566, 5568.

Each car has Armour Yellow sides, Harbor Mist Gray roof and underside, and red stripes

at top and bottom of sides. Red roadname in center and road numbers left and right. Approximate Time Period: 1957 (build date) to 1967 or later (see text). Previous Release: No Road Number, but with decals for car names and road numbers, January 2009 (pre-reviewed in the July 2008 UMTRR, e-mail version only). The Runner Pack releases should carry individual catalog numbers 553 5x 010 (51 to 53).

It was July 2008 – yes, over five years ago – when Micro-Trains made the announcement of a series of streamline passenger cars. At the time I reported that the 70 foot baggage car with the somewhat unusual offset roadname was built by American Car and Foundry in 1957 with road numbers 5664 to 5678 and 5711 to 5745. As with the other initial UP releases, though, I got no farther than that since MTL didn't print a specific road number on the first run, instead providing decals for a variety of road numbers. That might not have worked out so well, so MTL has gradually been offering numbered Runner Packs for the UP cars. The Pullman sleepers were Runner Pack #23 released in November 2010, and the dome cars are this month's Runner Pack entry. That leaves only the coaches to be done, which I suspect will happen at some point.

Meanwhile, on Page 66 of the **Union Pacific Color Guide to Freight and Passenger Equipment Volume 2**, there's a 1963 photo of the 5744 from the second group of the AC&F cars. It's noted that this and the others in the 5711 to 5745 were built for postal storage service. In Volume 1 it's pointed out that the UP stopped carrying mail in this manner in 1967 and converted other mail cars to company service, which would yield a shorter ATP than I am pointing out. However, at least the 5714 survived to July 1974, as it is pictured with the baggage doors screened and barred for excursion service. I guess we'll need to flex the Approximate Time Period for these cars.

Z SCALE SPECIAL EDITION RELEASES:



524 00 105, \$24.95

Reporting Marks: USAAC 667437.

60 Foot Flat Car with "Heavenly Body" container.

Release #5 in the World War II Nose Art Series.

Gray flat car with black lettering including reporting marks on left and "U.S. Army Air Corps" in center. Green container with multicolor artwork including nose art depiction on left.

A quick online search reveals that there are at least several Nose Art depictions with a woman and the phrase "Heavenly Body." There are at least two very similar depictions of the "flying girl with cape" as well. The inspiration for the MTL choice of art was painted on a plane flown by "The Crusaders" – the 390th Squadron of the 42nd Bomb Group of the 13th Air Force. The 13th Air Force is unusual in that it has never been stationed in the Continental United States; established in December 1942, it was involved in the Pacific Theatre during World War II and was headquartered in a number of locations including New Caledonia, the Solomon Islands and the Netherlands East Indies. Much more recently, it was based in the Philippines until Mount Pinatubo buried the Clark Air Force based, after which it was relocated to Hawaii.

The following item is in pre-order at present and is NOT currently available. Scheduled delivery is April 2014. UMTRR coverage is being provided ahead of the actual release of these items in order to facilitate pre-order decisions; pre-orders close November 30.



980 01 530, \$109.95

Road Number: 1945 (will be preceded with "USAAC" in website listings).

World War II Nose Art Powered F7 Diesel Locomotive.

Accompanying release to the World War II Nose Art Flat Car with Container Series. Oliver green with yellow lettering including "U.S.A.A.C." in center and road number at rear. Legend "Sentimental Journey" in red and black below with depiction of very famous World War II-era "pin up" on cab door.

That "very famous World War II-era 'pin-up'" is, of course, Betty Grable. The iconic photo of the actress with the "million-dollar legs" (which were insured for that much!) was called one of the "100 Photos That Changed the World" by Life Magazine. Apparently, though, it's no longer under copyright and therefore MTL should not have an issue reproducing it for this release (nor should I for pulling it from Wikimedia, under Creative Commons). Grable (1916-1973) enjoyed a brief but successful career in musicals in the 1940s. Like like many other actors, she was typecast and found it difficult to



break out of her stereotype. Her last film role was in 1955. Grable was married first to child star Jackie Coogan and then to big band trumpeter Harry James.

The phrase "Sentimental Journey" on the nose of the F7 is a reference to the immensely popular song of the same name, which was written by Les Brown, Ben Homer and Bud Green. The song was released by Brown with Doris Day on vocals and topped the charts in 1945. It's sometimes called the unofficial homecoming theme of the thousands of American soldiers who finished their tours of duty upon the end of the war.

HOn3 SCALE (NARROW GAUGE): No releases this month.

MTL ANNOUNCEMENTS: Just two items debut, both N Scale and both Civil War related. There's a pair of hay bale loads meant for use with the 26 foot flat cars (499 93 902, \$9.95) and a Ventilated Shed Kit (499 90 959, \$24.95).

SPECIAL RUN NEWS: The latest from George Hollwedel's Prototype N Scale Models is a three pack of Pacific Fruit Express "Ice Service" refrigerator cars. Older refrigerator cars were sometimes transferred to this purpose, and George's new offerings are examples of this. More information can be had directly from George at [proto.nscale at yahoo.com](mailto:proto.nscale@yahoo.com).



DISCONTINUED ALERT: We lead with two quick outs from last month's Weathered Releases. I thought that the N Scale Frisco covered hopper with the Halloween theme (096 44 110) would be gone quickly, and it was. But joining it is the Z Scale BNSF boxcar (511 44 190) which I did not expect.

We'll stick with Z Scale for three more cars on the bye-bye board, all fifty foot single door boxcars from 2012: the single release New York Central car with cigar band herald (505 00 280, June) and the pair of Santa Fe "Shock Control" cars (505 00 29x, September).

Four of the N Scale cars that have left the building are circus themed: the Ringling Brothers Billboard Series refrigerator cars #9 and #11 (047 00 409 and 047 00 411, May and July 2010) and the P.T. Barnum 26 Foot Flat Cars #1 and #2 (153 00 04x, September). There are just five other cars that are officially outta here this month. The single sheathed Rio Grande boxcar (028 00 200, August) has rolled on. The weathered Boston & Maine boxcar (031 44 440, mid-month September) is gone. The Schott Brewing refrigerator car, also known as Brewery Series #5 is drained (058 00 170, September). The Western & Atlantic single release Civil War boxcar (151 00 020, April) has marched out. Finally, the first number of the Georgia-Pacific modern log car (115 00 011) is emptied.

INCREMENTAL INFORMATION DEPARTMENT: Dave Ferrari, who knows quite a bit about intermodal containers (!), checked in to answer my question about the words “Empty Lift Only” on last month’s US Army containers (461 00 010 and 461 00 050): “This warning normally appears right above forklift slots in the bottom of a container. Those are far more common on a 20 foot container than on a 40-footer.” Dave provided a photo of a 20 foot container to me. “I wasn't able to find a proto photo of the containers MTL released but who knows what’s out there that hasn’t been photographed,” Dave added.

OOPS PATROL: The I’m still having issues getting this column out the door from the usual address. Hopefully that will be fixed shortly.

FINALLY, A RAILROAD CAR JOURNAL UPDATE: I closed last month’s issue with a description of Railroad Car Journal #1. Since then, I’ve picked up Issue #3 from Spring 1972 which featured Open and Covered Hoppers, and Issue #5 from Fall 1972 which, while covering Gondolas, has a shot of two long lines of Burlington Northern rotary dump coal cars on the cover. Besides the Frisco hopper reference point (see above), let’s say I’m definitely ready, should the “Crandic” gondola ever be rerun by Micro-Trains. A “coming soon” tease happens to include—surprise!—the same prototype photo of the Century Beer refrigerator that is also in the book **Billboard Refrigerator Cars**. What fun! I also now know that there should have been at least six issues, with #4 covering cabooses... now, to find those even numbered issues...

Until next time, do the best you can!

Cheers,
George

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