

# N.Y.C.S. BUSINESS CARS



## PART ONE



New York Central business car No. 5 sits at Youngstown, Ohio sometime in the 1930's. Car was built under Lot 2114 in 1931. Details of this car will be featured in following sections of N. Y. C. S. Business Cars. Paul W. Prescott Coll.

## BY W. D. EDSON & H. L. VAIL JR.

For many years, the New York Central's top brass made sure they had adequate quarters away from the home office. Management greats and near greats from president down to general managers, including chief engineers and even some superintendents made good use of the "business car" or "official car". Naturally, only the top officials rated their very own assigned cars, but some positions carried with them the privilege of using a "pool car".

The roster, the first part of which follows, lists no fewer than seventy-one individual cars used as official cars on the NYC and its predecessor lines. The oldest appears to date from approximately 1880, although it is not clear how many of those early cars were actually built for the purpose. No doubt most of these were converted from more prosaic cars as the idea caught on during the 1890's. Everything from pay cars to RPO cars were thoroughly rebuilt by West Albany and Collinwood and the other local shops in the era of the wooden car. A goodly number of conversions seem to have been from cafe cars or diners, probably because of the ready made kitchen facilities.

Very few interior photographs exist, but from all indications, most of these cars were well-appointed with all the luxuries found aboard private cars owned by famous personalities of the day. Indeed, some of the NYC cars were built for railroad directors and officials who were also leading lights in other industries and politics. Such a car was LS&MS 44, which was built in February, 1896 by the Wagner Palace Car Company, whose president was Dr. William

Seward Webb, son-in-law of William H Vanderbilt. The car was first assigned to Daniel W. Caldwell and later W.H. Newman, both presidents of the Lake Shore & Michigan Southern Railway, predecessor of the New York Central west of Buffalo. Still later, the car became the official car of the president of the New York Central itself.

As LS&MS Private Car 44, the car had two staterooms, a large kitchen, a dining room in the center of car, and observation rooms with open platforms on both ends. In 1914 it was rebuilt with steel underframe and a vestibule on one end. A third stateroom and a porter's room were added, and the car was relettered New York Central 44. In October, 1924 the car was rebuilt again, at West Albany. The interior was rearranged somewhat, and a shower added. A pair of standard K-3 trucks replaced the originals.

In May, 1928 the car was renumbered NYC 17, which remained until December, 1940, when the car was converted to a diner for wreck train service, and renumbered once more to X-928. For some years it was based at Bay City, Michigan, later being moved to Jackson, Michigan.

Finally the car was retired and sold in March, 1970, to Private Varnish Inc., a group of former New York Central employees, including several trustees of your society. They arranged for it to be moved to Harmon, N. Y. It was then purchased in January, 1973 by William Scazzero, who moved it to Valhalla, N. Y. for restoration, and today it serves as part of a fine restaurant beside the Harlem Division tracks at the passenger station.



Old business cars never die! Here is ex-N. Y. C., ex-Penn-Central No. 7 at Wesleyville, Pa. on September 6, 1978. Car reportedly belongs to Mr. Ted E. Church of Erie, Pa. Howard W. Ameling Collection

Car 44 was unusual in not going through many renumberings. What was so sacred about the number 44 we do not know, but there were other numbers that persisted for years, such as the 101, 201, and 301. Most cars, however, were numbered in definite series during the first decades of the century.

NYC&HR	492-499	CCC&StL	400-406
B&A	97-99	MC	1-8
LS&MS	200-207	P&LE	97-99

When the U.S. Railroad Administration took over the railroads during World War I, several of these cars were renumbered and relettered for the USRA, then returned to their original identity in 1920. Finally, in 1928, all the wood body official cars were renumbered in a new 11-29 series, only to be renumbered again in 1936-1937.

Steel business cars were rarities long after most wooden revenue passenger cars had been replaced. For many years there were only three steel official cars on the whole system, NYC 301 and 493, plus MC #1. In 1927-28 a major replacement program began, when Pullman delivered nine new steel heavyweights (NYC 1-5, B&A 99, MC1, CCC&StL 400, and P&LE 99). At that time the two older steel NYC cars became 6 and 7. Late in 1931 the last two official cars built new for the railroad were delivered, and these were assigned numbers 1 and 5 again, forcing the restenciling of the older 1 and 5 to new numbers 8 and 9. Then, during the general renumbering of all NYC equipment in 1936-37 many of these cars were assigned still different numbers.

Also in 1937 two genuine private cars were acquired, the ERRANT and NOMAD, formerly the property of William Randolph Hearst and J. S. Cravens. They roamed the system for 20 years as NYC 14 and 15. In 1948 four more heavyweights were acquired second hand from Pullman. The first two were extraordinary cars, built in the late '20's as part of a small fleet for lease to private parties. These cars were all named by Pullman for famous explorers; the two which became NYC 17 and 18 were the ROALD AMUNDSEN and DAVID LIVINGSTONE. An identical car, the FERDINAND MAGELLAN became known as POTUS I, for it was assigned to Presidents Roosevelt and Truman.

The other pair of cars purchased just after World War II came from Pullman as ordinary ten (10) section open plat-

form observation cars, MT. HOOD and MT. DESERT. After extensive remodeling they became #19 and #20. The final acquisition was a rare lightweight from the Chesapeake & Ohio, the car brought along by Robert R. Young in 1954. It ran as NYC 28 for five years, then was sold to Mrs. Charles Payson after Young's death.

One more car which was often grouped with the official cars in later years was the #30. This was originally a beautiful old heavyweight Pullman parlor observation car named the QUEEN ELIZABETH. (PC&M 1924 lot 4862, plan 3957, with twenty-six (26) chairs and a drawing room) For years it operated on the rear of the "Empire" as the HUDSON RIVER. When purchased by the NYC it then became the KALAMAZOO RIVER being transferred to the MC's Twilight in 1942 after the "Empire" was streamlined. After the war the Twilight was re-equipped also, and the car was renamed again, for stand-by service as the VICTORIA PARK. Finally, in 1952, the car became NYC #30, lot 2167, and the interior was changed somewhat for use as an inspection car and portable conference hall. It still serves the same purpose for Conrail today, as Conrail 10, having served the Penn Central as PC 30.

The last of the wood body business cars disappeared in 1953, although a handful lived on for many more years as X-cars, often in wreck train service. Quite a few of the steel cars were eventually sold to other roads including the B&M and D&H. Two even went to Mexico, and four others became real private cars.

By merger time only ten remained, the 1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 9, 10, 11, and 20. Most of these were scheduled to retain their same numbers on the Penn Central roster, the exception being #1 which was slated to become #2. The new #1 was supposed to be Stuart Saunder's car, the streamlined PRR 1000. Other PRR cars were to fill the voids in the series, i.e. #8 and 12-19. The new Penn Central management, however, absolutely could not face the need to renumber their pet cars, and the 1000 stayed number 1000, PRR 7507 remained the 7507, and so on, even though the result was duplication of numbers with other PC cars. Car 1000 was eventually sold, but that was long after NYC 1 had been relettered Penn Central, and repainted a very dark shade of green with striping, completely different from other PC passenger cars. Here was very clear evidence that merging the two managements was not going smoothly.

Now most of these cars are finally gone, and it remains for the Penn Central and Conrail historians to write the very last chapter.

The roster and information which follows will begin with

the all steel cars, as photographs of these are available.

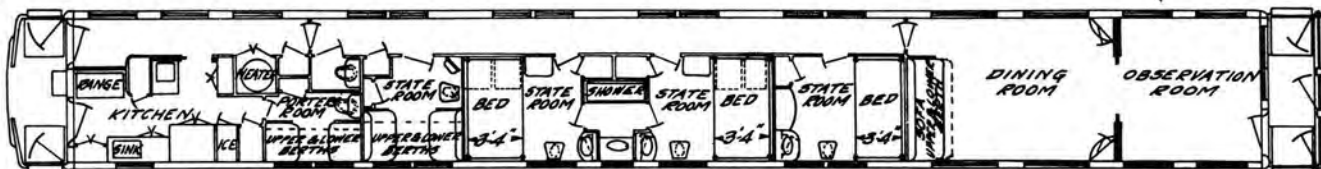
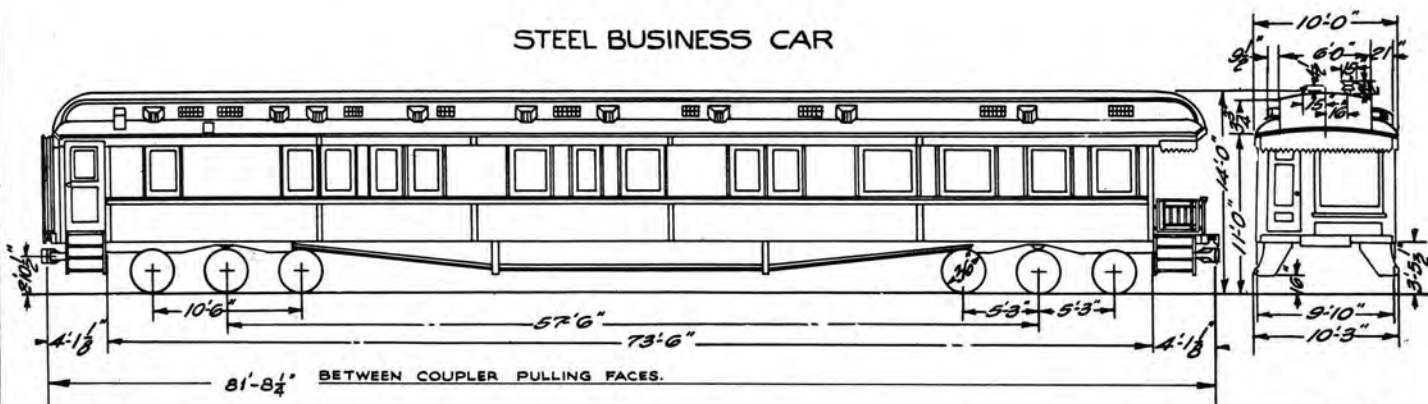
We will appreciate hearing from our members, and anyone else, who may have photographs of the woodbodied business cars so that when this material is presented, photographs can be included.



Here is the "business end" of car No. 493, named "Herkimer". This N. Y. C. & H. R. car was originally assigned to President W. C. Brown. For further details see pages 20 and 21. Note offset end door and wide "picture window."



## STEEL BUSINESS CAR



CAR NO.	OLD NO.	LOT NO.	YEAR BUILT	BUILDER	WEIGHT		TOTAL WEIGHT	DRAFT GEAR	STYLE OF BRAKE	GENERATOR	TRUCK CLASS	REMARKS
					OBS. END	KITCHEN END						
12	7	786	1910	PULLMAN CO.	87000	95500	182500	MINER A-4-XB	WEST. UCB	G-4-B	SPECIAL	SPECIAL DESIGN TRUCK, CAST STEEL, SINGLE BEAM BRAKE, 5" X 9" JOURNALS.

DINING ROOM, OBSERVATION ROOM AND MASTER BED ROOM, AIR CONDITIONED, ICE ACTIVATED.

NOTE:- CAR BUILT AS "HERKIMER", SUBSEQUENT CAR NOS. N.Y.C. 493, USRA #3, N.Y.C. #493.

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### I ROSTER OF STEEL CARS

NYC&HR	493	(9/10-1915)	Pullman 9/10 Lot 3844, Plan 2516, NYC lot 786	73'6"
NYC	493	(1915-7/19)	Named "HERKIMER"	Originally assigned to W. C. Brown, Pres.
USRA	3(2nd)	(7/19-4/20)		
NYC	493	(4/20-4/28)		
NYC	7(1st)	(4/28-6/36)		
NYC	12(2nd)	(6/36-9/53)	Sold 9/53 to Joseph V. LaMantia. Named "JOVILA" #28	



Side view of N. Y. C. & H. R. business car No. 493 "Herkimer" as built. Note brass trim and imitation grooved "wood" on the sides of this steel car. This car is a real classic.

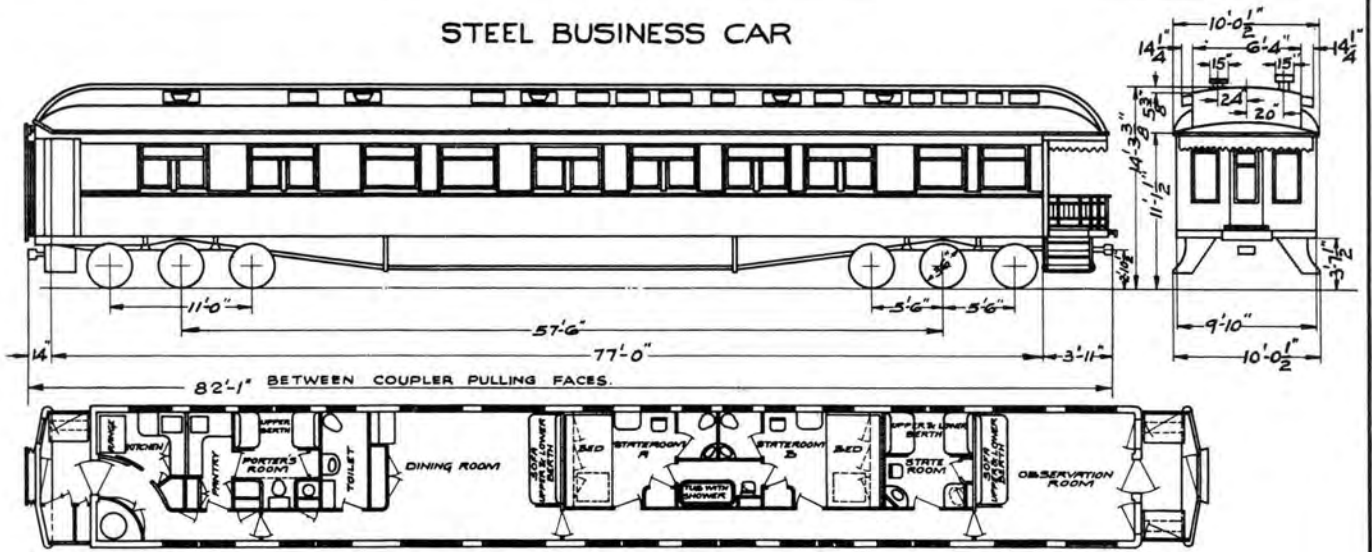


Looking into the observation room from the dining room of car No. 493 "Herkimer".



One of the "middle" state rooms on car 493 "Herkimer" showing reading light, thermometer and small but sturdy dresser with heavy locks on each drawer.

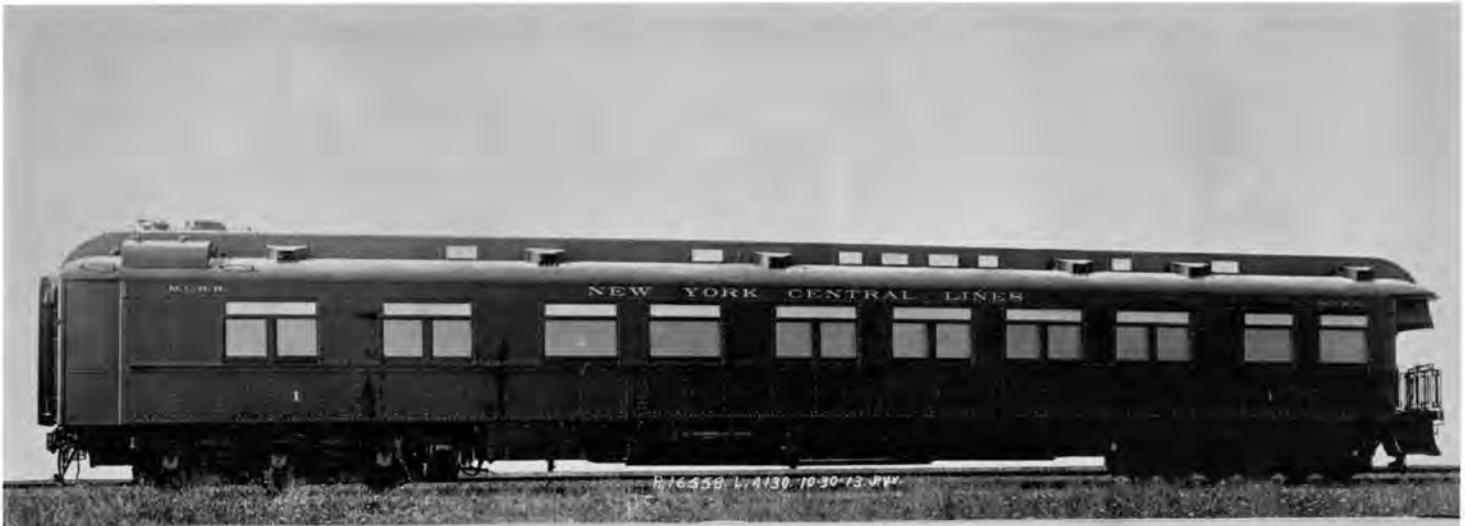
# STEEL BUSINESS CAR



CAR NO.	OLD NO.	LOT NO.	YEAR BUILT	BUILDER	WEIGHT		TOTAL WEIGHT	DRAFT GEAR	STYLE OF BRAKE	GENERATOR	TRUCK CLASS	REMARKS
					OBS. END	KITCHEN END						
8	MC8	—	1913	PULLMAN Co.			180300	MIN.A-4-XB	WEST.UCB	G-4-B	K-4	CAR BUILT AS MC.#1

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MC	1	(10/13-2/28)	Pullman 10/13 Lot 4130, Plan 2729, NYC lot 2014	73'6"
MC	8	(2/28-3/37)	Originally assigned to H. B. Ledyard Pres. MCRR	
NYC	8	(3/37-7/53)	Sold 7/53 to Boston & Maine	



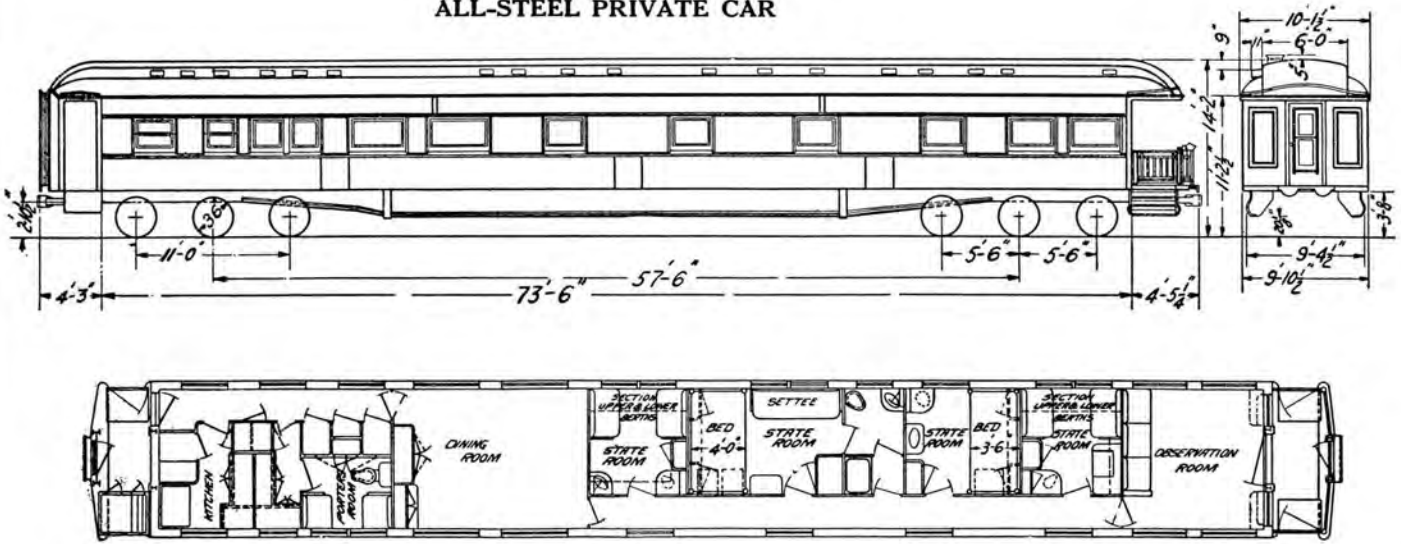
Michigan Central business car No. 1 stands for an official builders portrait at Pullman in 1913. Car was later renumbered as No. 8 and was sold to the Boston & Maine in July, 1953.



End view of Michigan Central No. 1 shows classic brass trim on handrails and end platform. Center mounted rear door appears to be equipped with a storm door and is marked "Private". White outline around left side of car marks an early attempt to "matte" the photo for a white background. This was often done by car and locomotive builders alike when they wanted a white background to "show off" their new product.



ALL-STEEL PRIVATE CAR



Circa June, 1926

NYC	301	(11/17-5/18)
USRA	3(1st)	(5/18-6/19)
NYC	301	(6/19-4/28)
NYC	6(1st)	(4/28-11/39)
NYC	16(2nd)	(11/39-7/57)

Pullman 11/17 Lot 4474, Plan 3323, NYC lot 894 73'6"

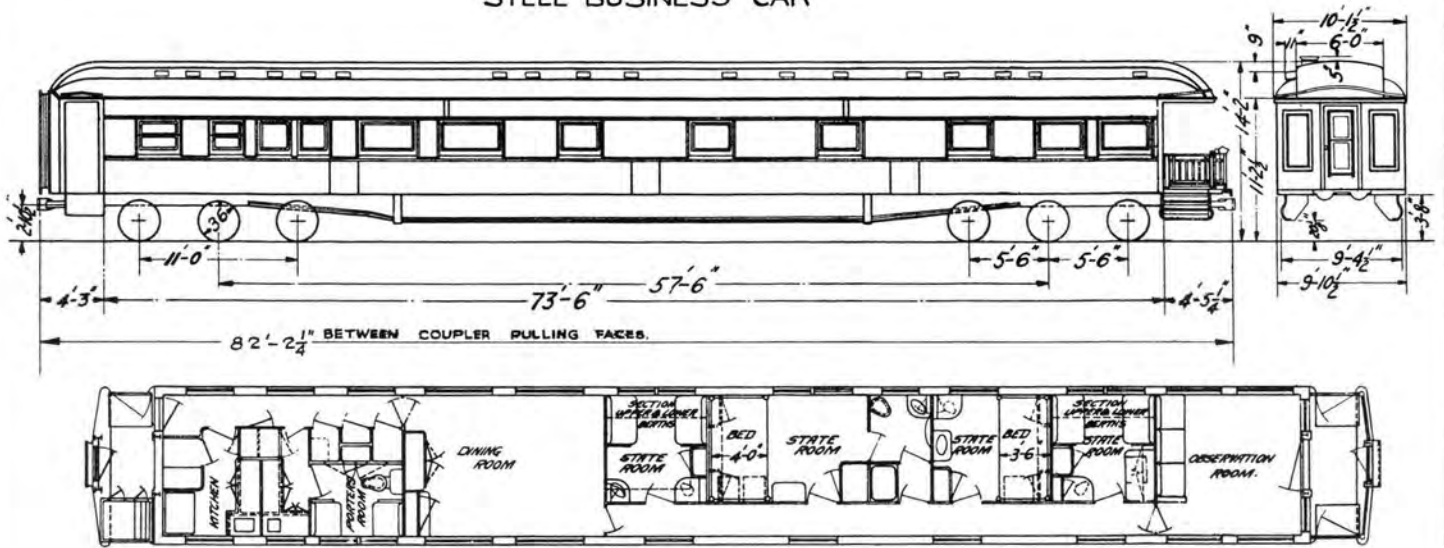
Sold 7/57 to Pitts. & W. Virginia 400



N. Y. C. business car No. 301 was relettered as U. S. R. A. No. 3 in May, 1918. This lettering was removed by June, 1919.



# STEEL BUSINESS CAR



CAR NO.	LOT NO.	YEAR BUILT	BUILDER	WEIGHT		TOTAL WEIGHT	DRAFT GEAR	STYLE OF BRAKE	GENERATOR	TRUCK CLASS	REMARKS
				OBS. END	KITCHEN END						
16	894	1917	PULLMAN Co.	84300	94200	178500	MINER A-4-XB	WEST.UCB	G-4-B	*K-3	* SPECIAL DESIGN TO PULLMAN DIMENSIONS WITH 5 1/2" X 10" JOURNALS.

NOTE:- CAR BUILT AS N.Y.C. # 301, SUBSEQUENT CAR NO. USRA # 3, N.Y.C.#301, N.Y.C.#6.

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By this date the settee was removed from the center state room.



N. Y. C. business car No. 301, Lot 4474, Plan 3323, new at Pullman in November, 1917. Marks at right side of photo are tears in original negative. Pullman architecture in background is interesting. Smithsonian Institution Collection.





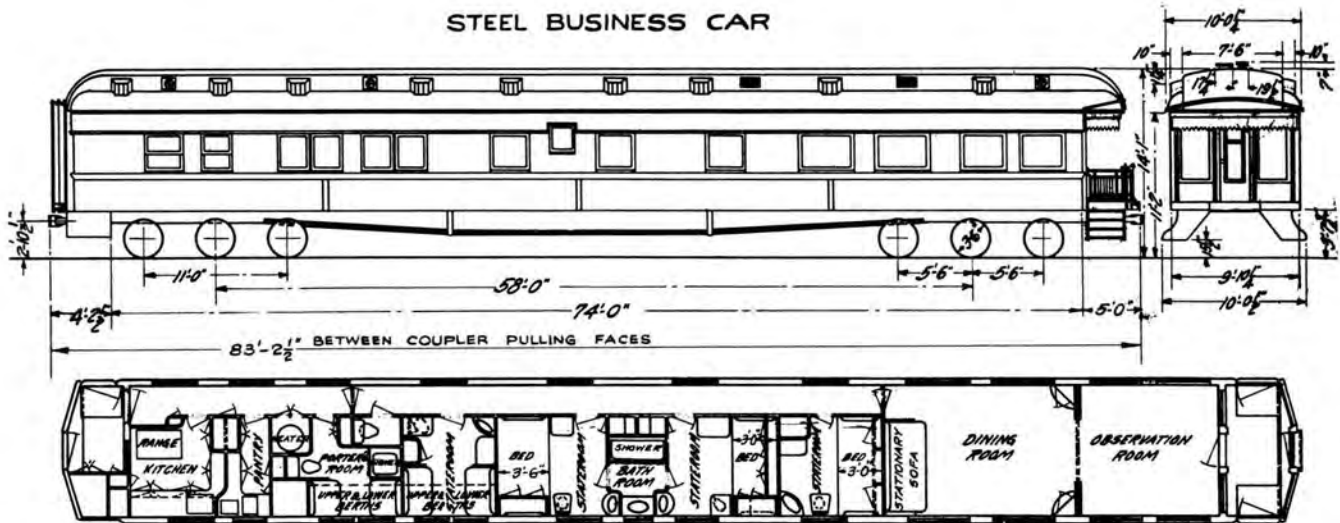
Builders side view of N. Y. C. Lines business car No. 1 showing same side of car as official diagram.



Interior of observation room on business car No. 1 looking towards rear door. Note lighted speedometer, thermometer, and clock all mounted on back wall of car.



### STEEL BUSINESS CAR



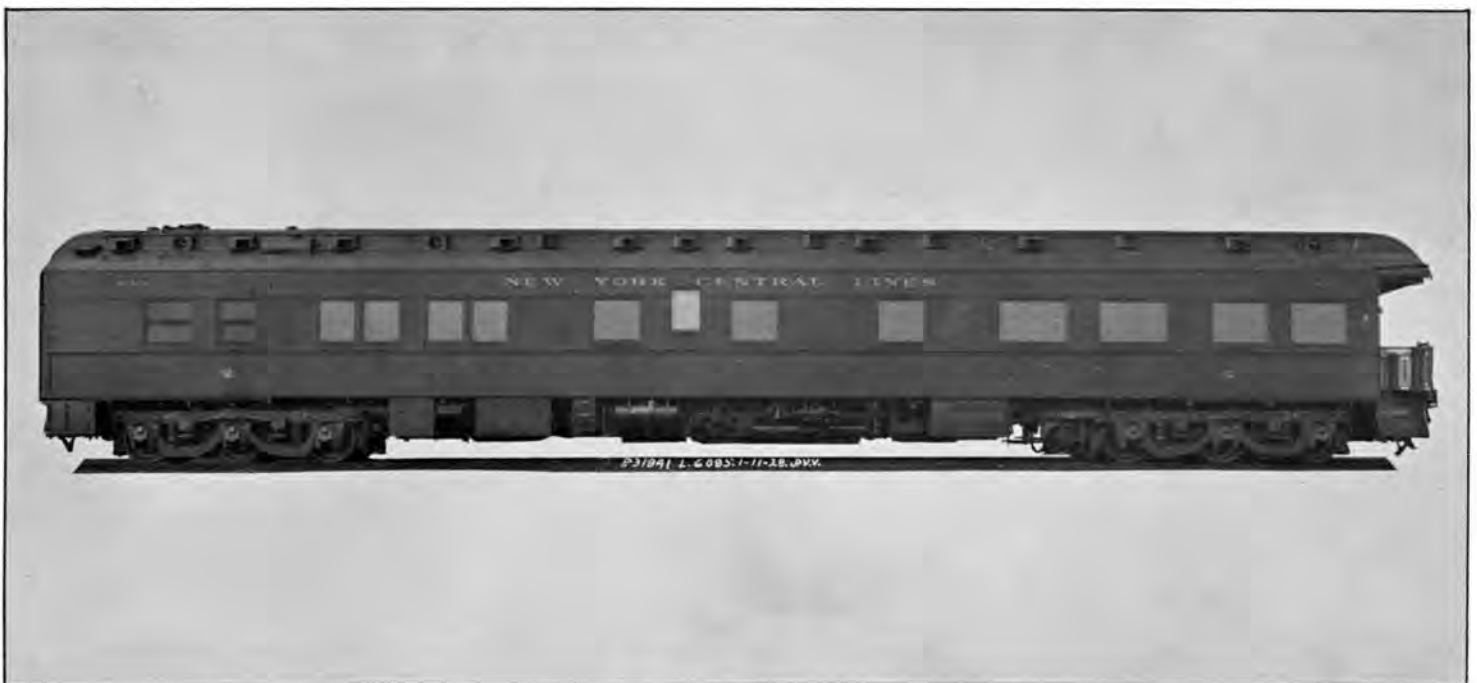
CAR NO.	LOT NO.	YEAR BUILT	BUILDER	WEIGHT		TOTAL WEIGHT	DRAFT GEAR	STYLE OF BRAKE	GENERATOR	TRUCK CLASS	REMARKS
				OBS. END	KITCHEN END						
2	2048	1928	P.C. & M. CORP.	91600	106100	197700	MINER A-5-XBF	WEST. UCB	G-4-B	K-F-X	CAR HAS DELCO LIGHTING EQUIPMENT ALSO

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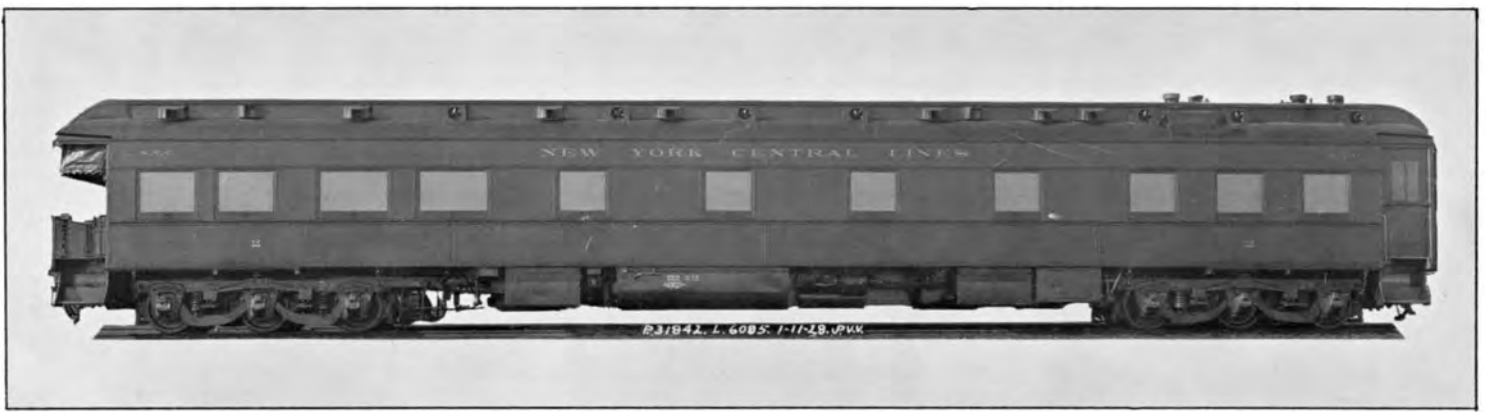
NYC 2(1st) (1/28-7/52)  
 NYC 7(3rd) (7/52- )

Pullman 1/28, Lot 6085, Plan 7134, NYC lot 2048  
 Originally assigned to A. H. Harris

74'0"



Builders side view of N. Y. C. Lines business car No. 2 as built by Pullman in January, 1928.

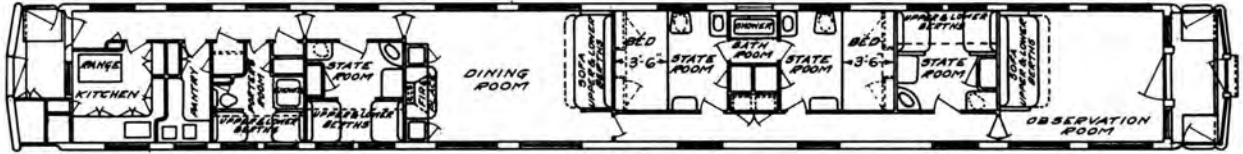
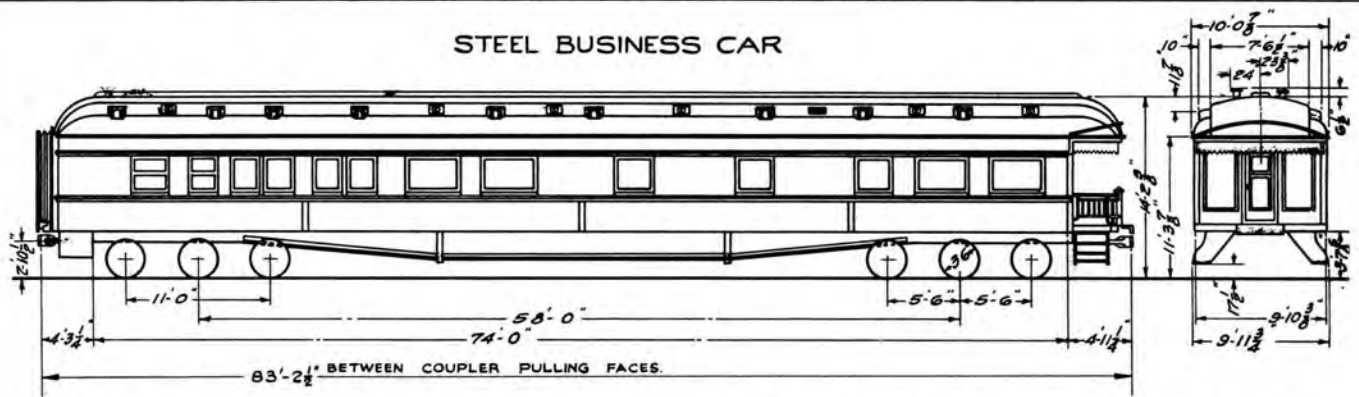


Builders view of N. Y. C. Lines business car No. 2 showing opposite side of car appearing on official diagram.



View of main stateroom located next to dining room of business car No. 2. Above the end of the bed are mounted; reading lamp, water pitcher with bracket and drinking glass holder. Control panel at left operated heating controls, ventilation fans and a push button to summon the porter. Heaven help the engineer if the ride was rough enough to require the use of the handrail mounted on the wall.

# STEEL BUSINESS CAR



CAR NO.	LOT NO.	YEAR BUILT	BUILDER	WEIGHT		TOTAL WEIGHT	DRAFT GEAR	STYLE OF BRAKE	GENERATOR	TRUCK CLASS	REMARKS
				OBS. END	KITCHEN END						
3	2047	1928	P.C. & M. CORP.	92200	103000	195200	MINER A-5-XB	N.Y. UCB	G-4-B	K-7-X	

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NYC 3 (5/28- )

Pullman 5/28, Lot 6084, Plan \_\_\_\_\_, NYC lot 2047, 74'0"  
Originally assigned to Harold Vanderbilt



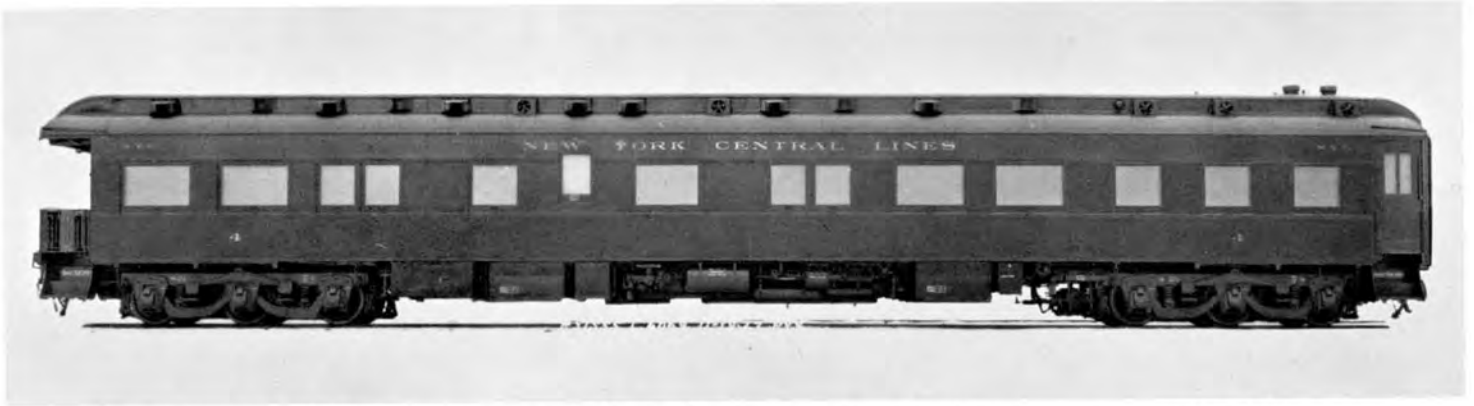
Builders photo of N. Y. C. business car No. 3. Note that lettering is; "New York Central Lines" with smaller lettering of "N. Y. C. " at car ends. Lot No. 2047.





How do you like this for class? Dining room near center of Car No. 3 was equipped with a real working fireplace. View is looking toward "kitchen end" of car from observation room.





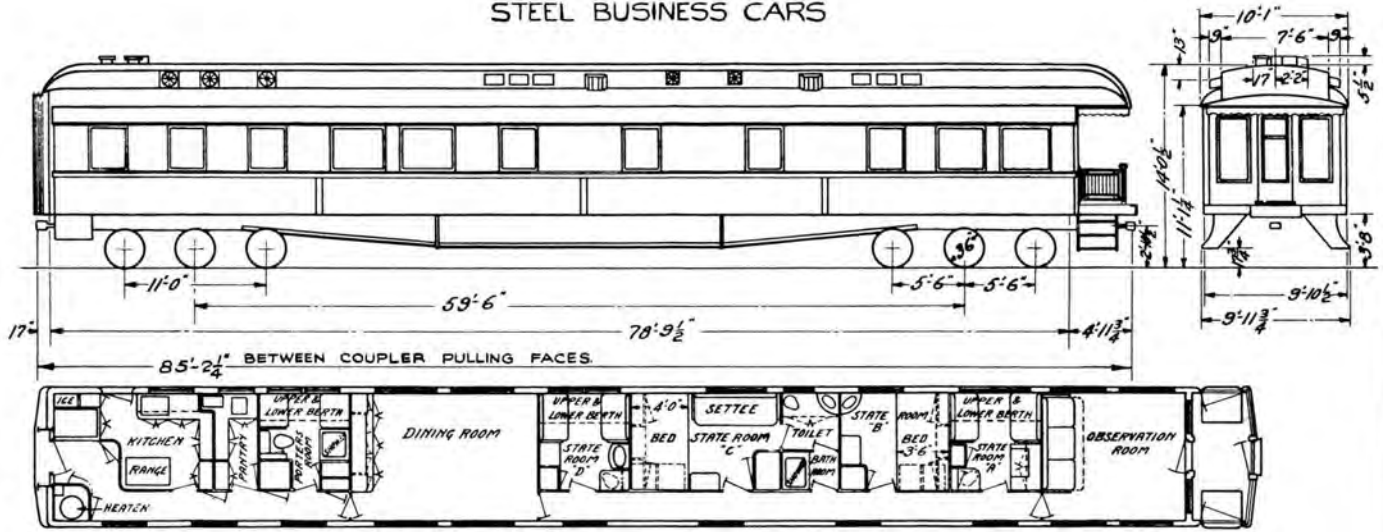
Builders view of N. Y. C. Lines business car No. 4 showing opposite side of car appearing on official diagram.



Interior view of rear of observation room on car No. 4. Note removable table above heating coils at back window. Fancy curtains match fabric on chair seat cushions.



## STEEL BUSINESS CARS



CAR NO.	LOT NO.	YEAR BUILT	BUILDER	WEIGHT		TOTAL WEIGHT	DRAFT GEAR	STYLE OF BRAKE	GENERATOR	TRUCK CLASS	REMARKS
				OBS. END	KITCHEN END						
1	2113	1930	P.C. & M. CORP.	95700	108600	204300	WAUGH 738-11	N.Y. UCB	G-4-B	K-8-X	
5	2114	"	"	96000	108100	204100	WAUGH TWIN CUSHION 738-11 (MODIFIED)	N.Y. UCB	G-4-B	K-8-X	

CARS HAVE PRESSURE VENTILATING SYSTEMS.

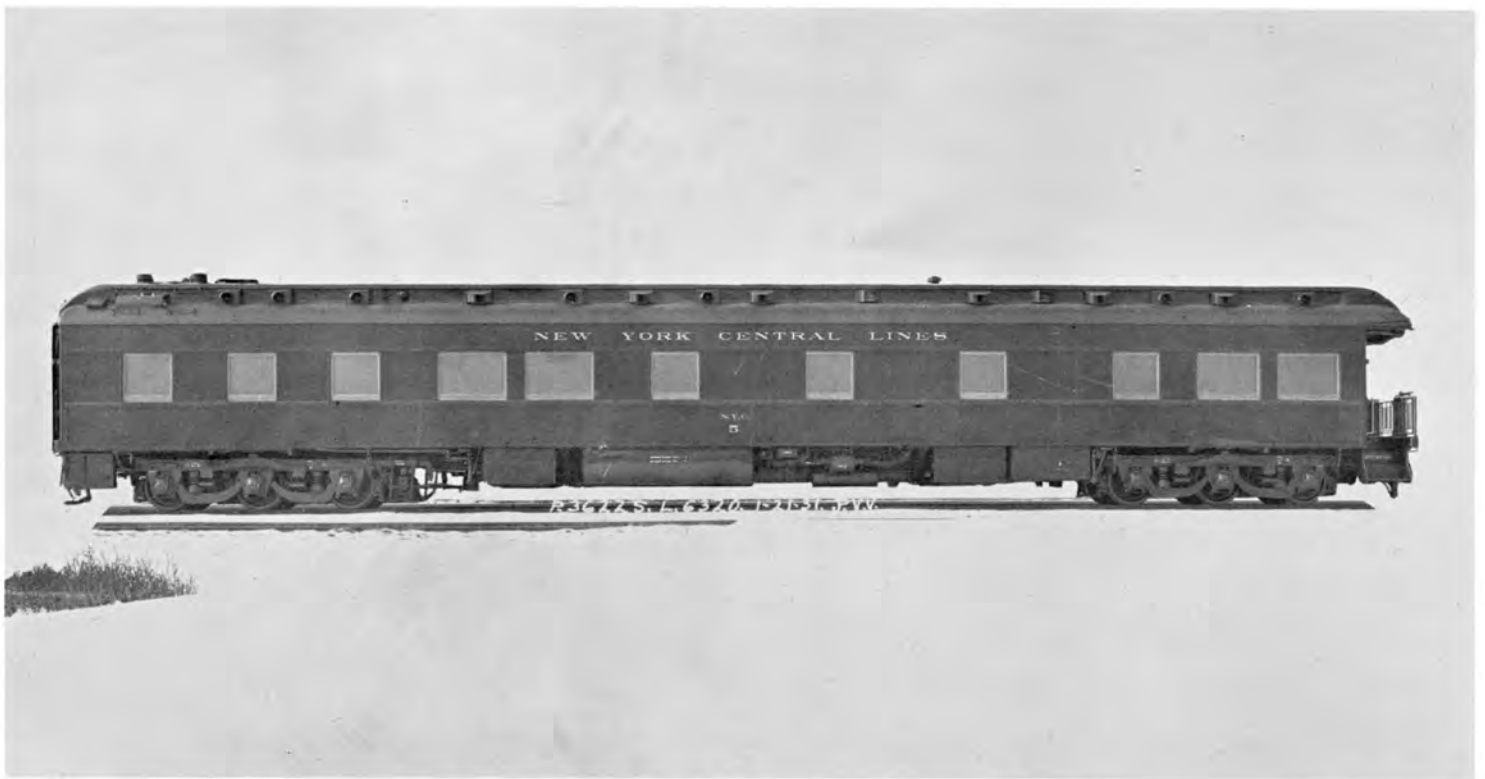
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NYC            1(2nd) (12/31- )   Pullman 12/31, Lot 6320, Plan \_\_\_\_\_, NYC lot 2113   78'10"

NYC            5(2nd) (12/31- )   Pullman 12/31, Lot 6320, Plan \_\_\_\_\_, NYC lot 2114   78'10"



Builders side view of N. Y. C. No. 5 as it appeared on January 12, 1931. Note fancy curtains in windows.

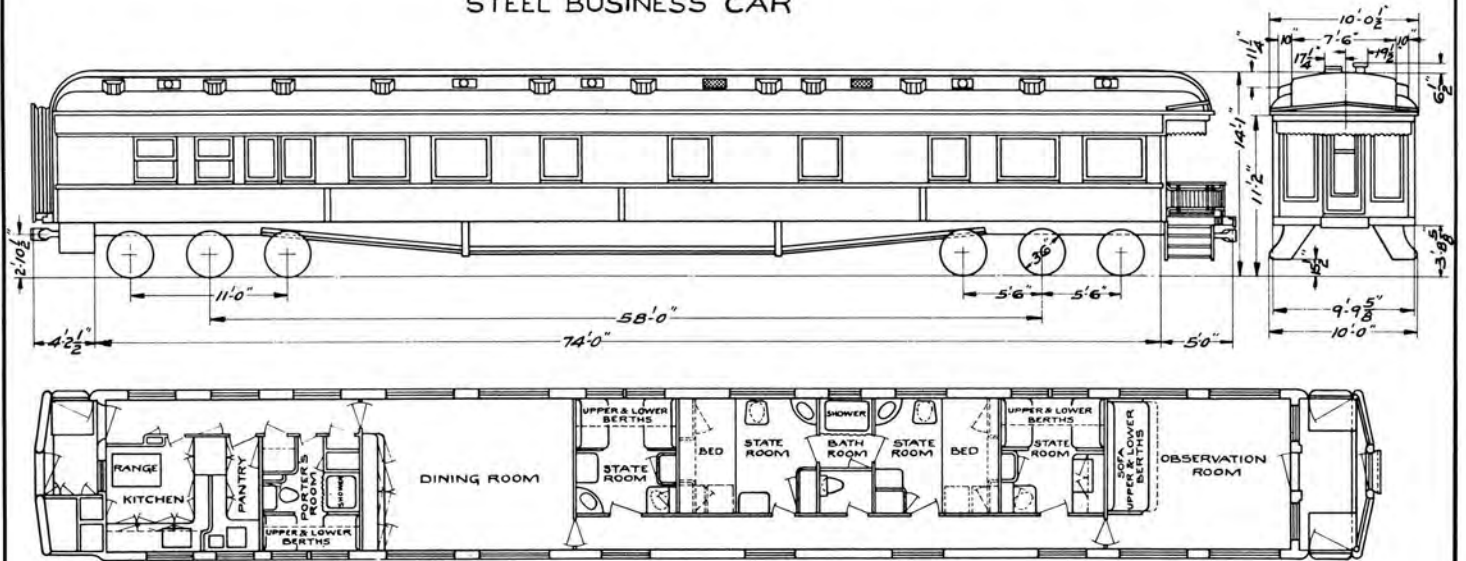


Builders side view of N. Y. C. No. 5 showing same side as official diagram.



Interior view of N. Y. C. No. 1 showing portion of observation room area as it appeared on March 12, 1946. Note push button radio and speaker built into corner table and photo mural of Grand Central Station.

# STEEL BUSINESS CAR



CAR NO.	LOT NO.	YEAR BUILT	BUILDER	WEIGHT		TOTAL WEIGHT	DRAFT GEAR	STYLE OF BRAKE	GENERATOR	TRUCK CLASS	REMARKS
				OBS. END	KITCHEN END						
99	2093	1928	P.C.&M.CORP.	90700	98200	188900	MIN. A-5-XB	WESTUCB	S-4-B	K-7-X	

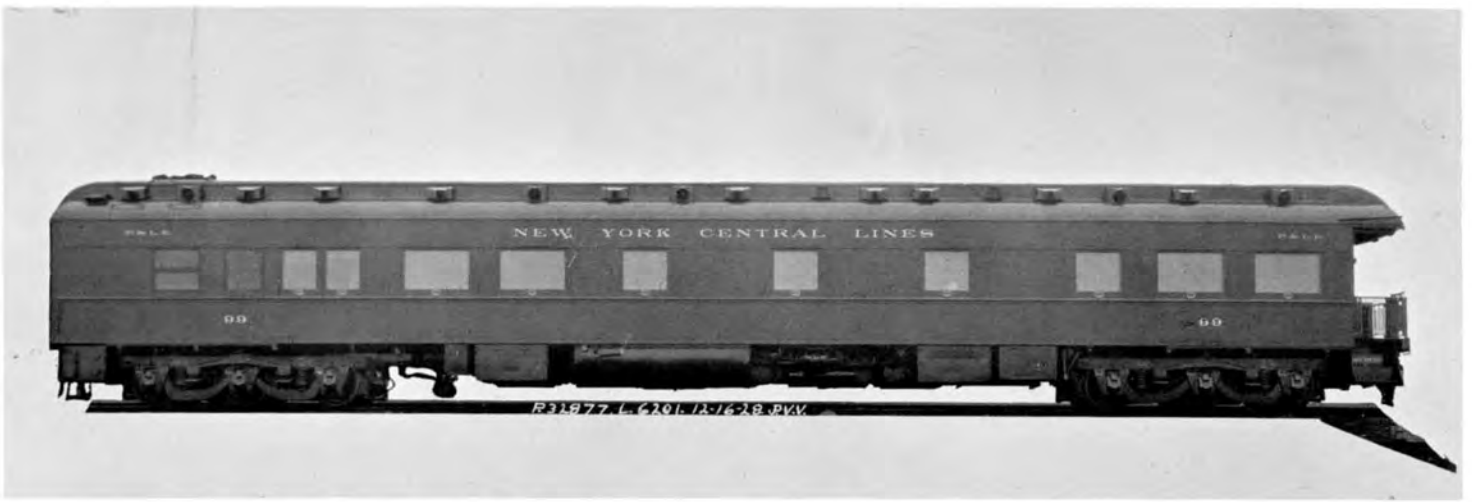
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P&LE 99(2nd) (12/28- ) Pullman 12/28, Lot 6201, Plan \_\_\_\_\_, NYC lot 2093 74'0"  
 Sold to Taylor, named "SEAVIEW"



Builders side view of P. & L. E. No. 99 taken on December 16, 1928.



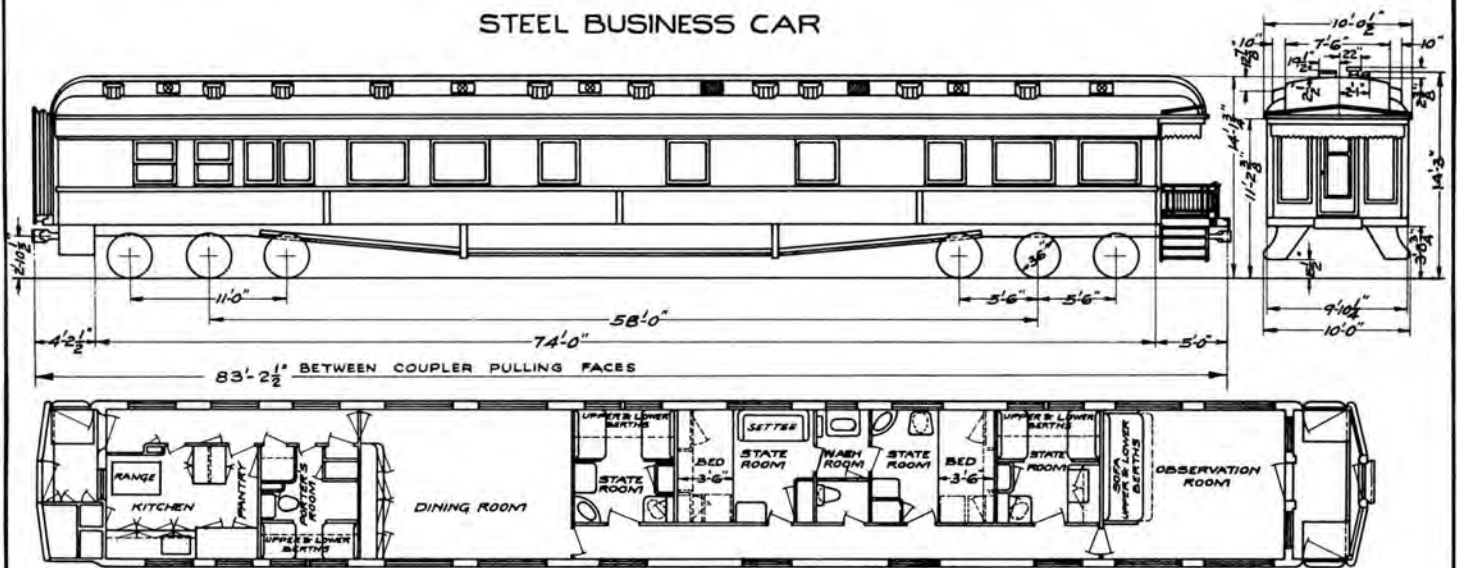


Builders side view of P. & L.E. No. 99 showing same side as official diagram.



Interior view of P. & L.E. No. 99 showing one end of the pantry. Note overhead water tank and large padlock on supply cabinets below sink.

## STEEL BUSINESS CAR



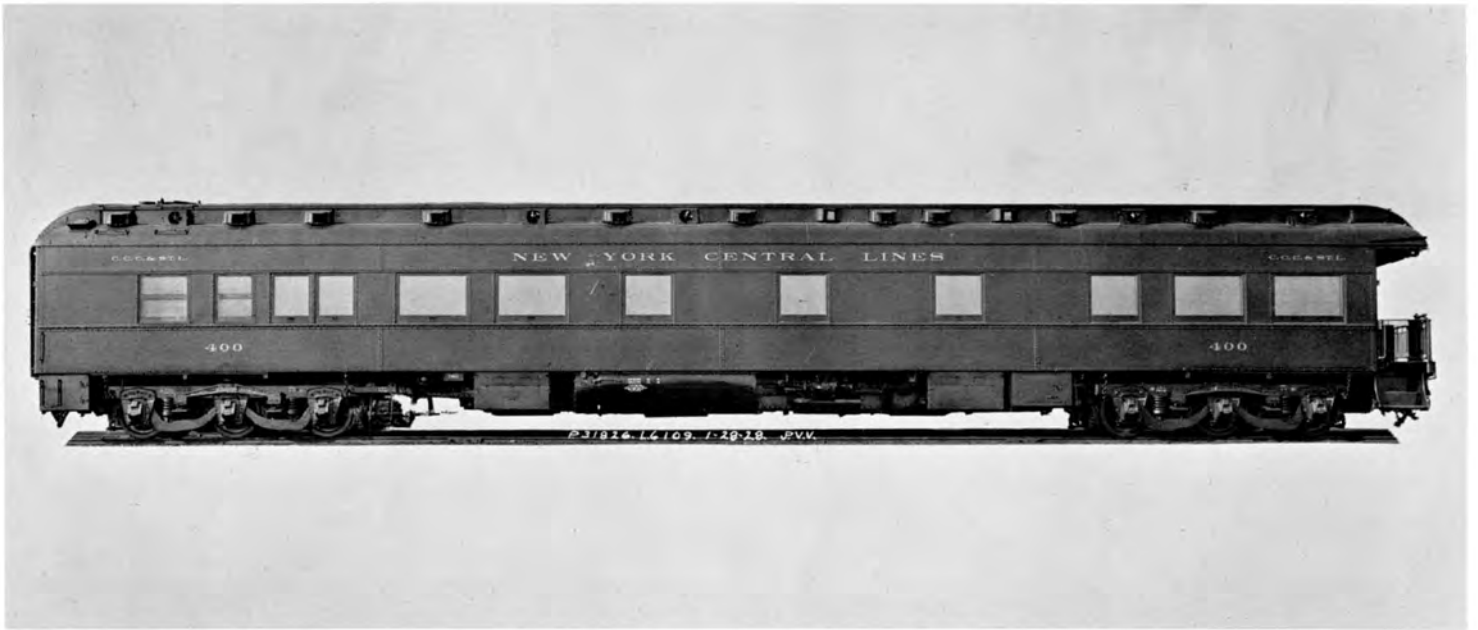
CAR NO.	LOT NO.	YEAR BUILT	BUILDER	WEIGHT		TOTAL WEIGHT	DRAFT GEAR	STYLE OF BRAKE	GENERATOR	TRUCK CLASS	REMARKS
				OBS. END	KITCHEN END						
9	2073	1928	P. C. & M. CORP.	89400	97900	187300	MINER A-5-XBF	N.Y. UCB	G-4-B	K-7-X	CAR BUILT AS N.Y.C. #5

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NYC	5(1st)	(1/28-12/31)	Pullman 1/28, Lot 6109, Plan 7154, NYC lot 2073	74'0"
NYC	9	(12/31- )	Originally assigned to R. D. Starbuck	
B & A	99	(1/28-11/39)	Pullman 1/28, Lot 6109, Plan 7154, NYC lot 2074	74'0"
NYC	6(2nd)	(11/39- )		
MC	1	(1/28-5/36)	Pullman 1/28, Lot 6109, Plan 7154, NYC lot 2075	74'0"
NYC	10	(5/36- )		
CCC&StL	400	(1/28-5/36)	Pullman 1/28, Lot 6109, Plan 7154, NYC lot 2076	74'0"
NYC	7(2nd)	(5/36-7/52)		
NYC	2(2nd)	(7/52-10/55)	Sold 10/55 to Delaware & Hudson 300 (Later EL300)	



Builders side view of C. C. C. & St. L. No. 400 taken on January 28, 1928. Car was renumbered to N. Y. C. No. 7 (2nd) and later became N. Y. C. No. 2 (2nd) before being sold to the Delaware & Hudson in October, 1955.



Builders side view of C. C. C. & St. L. No. 400 showing same side as official diagram.



Interior view of dining room area on N. Y. C. No. 9 taken at Mott Haven Yard on February 9, 1948.