

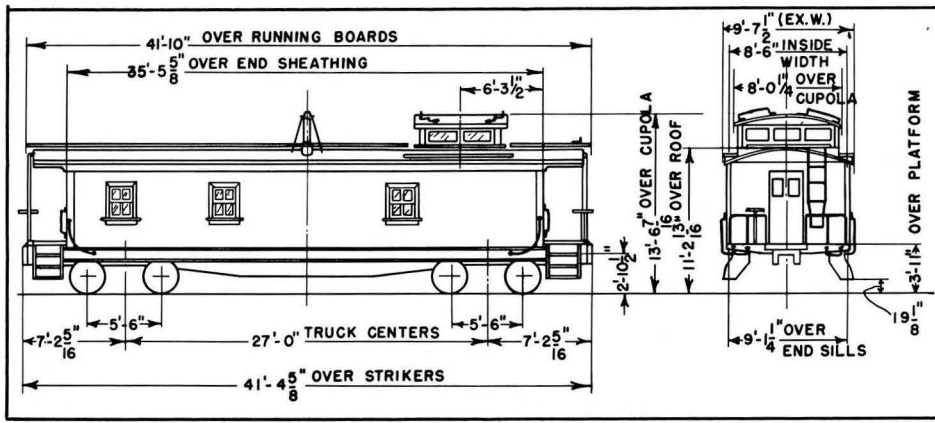
CABOOSE The CLASSICS



Part Two



Caboose No. 20110 stands for its "builders" portrait at East Buffalo, N. Y. where it was rebuilt in 1944 from a 1910 era box car. Notice how closely this series of cars follows the general lines of the "standard" N. Y. C. caboose shown in "The Caboose Classics (Part One)". There were 50 cars in this series; No. 20100 thru 20149. Most of these, (45) were painted box car red as shown above. Five were painted Vermillion and Gray to match N. Y. C.'s "Pacemaker" high speed freight service equipment. All were built as lot order No. 732, their overall weight was 30 tons. W. D. Edson Collection



N. Y. C. "Converted" Caboose, No. 20100 - 20149, Lot Order No. 732.

During World War II, the New York Central System along with most other U.S. railroads, was kept constantly short of both motive power and rolling stock. Heavy shipments of war material destined for the four corners of the globe as well as large domestic orders for raw materials and machinery necessary to feed American industry, created a severe strain on the equipment rosters. To solve the motive power shortage, orders were rushed to locomotive builders that resulted in L-3 Mohawks from Alco, the superb L-4's from Lima, countless 0-8-0 yard switchers, as well as War Production Board order permitting the N. Y. C. to order its first FT road diesels from General Motors. Besides the new equipment orders, the Central had to rely heavily on overhaul and rebuilding of old and obsolete steam locomotives that normally would have been sold for scrap long ago.

In order to solve the problem of obtaining more cabooses to operate with the increased number of freight train movements, drastic steps were called for. Many old box cars were culled from riptracks all over the System and were quickly rebuilt into temporary cabooses. These "conversions" were not intended to last very long, so not much time and effort were expended in their rebuilding. No accurate record exists today regarding roster information on these cabooses, many of them lasted only a matter of months before scrapping, some were "retired" to work or wreck train service, and at least a few were known to have served as small storage buildings or tool sheds after having been removed from their trucks and placed on the ground where needed. These cars were most often cold in winter, hot during the summer, and

dirty and rough riding all of the time. These interesting cars were N. Y. C.'s caboose "soldiers". They were "drafted" from other duties, to serve when and where needed to do a necessary job that had to be done, and to be quickly discharged when the conflict was over. They served their country well. What more could be said of any veteran?

In 1944, fifty 36' wooden bodied box cars from Lots 234, 236, 240, 247, and 262B were rebuilt into rather handsome cabooses by the N. Y. C.'s East Buffalo, N. Y. Shops. The "new" cabooses were numbered 20100 through 20149 and were assigned Lot Order No. 732. In outward appearance, the cabooses resembled the N. Y. C. "standard" which was 30' - 1 5/8" versus 35' - 5 5/8" long for the rebuilds. Secondly, all of rebuilt cabooses had steel underbody frames and siderails and were not equipped with the truss rod type of carbody supports that the "standard" caboose was equipped with. These rebuildings were not "quickie" projects and unlike the earlier converted box cars, these were built to serve for years. Quite a few lasted into the 1960's, with at least 24 of them still in existence as late as 1962. In 1946, five of these cabooses, 20112, 20117, 20129, 20132 and 20133, were selected for service on N. Y. C.'s newly inaugurated "Pacemaker" freight train service. In order to provide a smooth "modern" appearance, the caboose bodies were sheathed with plywood and painted to match the "Pacemaker" box cars (see July 1974 "Headlight", Page 13). Besides the Vermillion and Gray paint job, these cars were equipped with AB-1-B air brakes, signal lines and Waughmat twin cushion draft gear. The trucks were high speed Barber-Bettendorf 4 1/4" x 8".

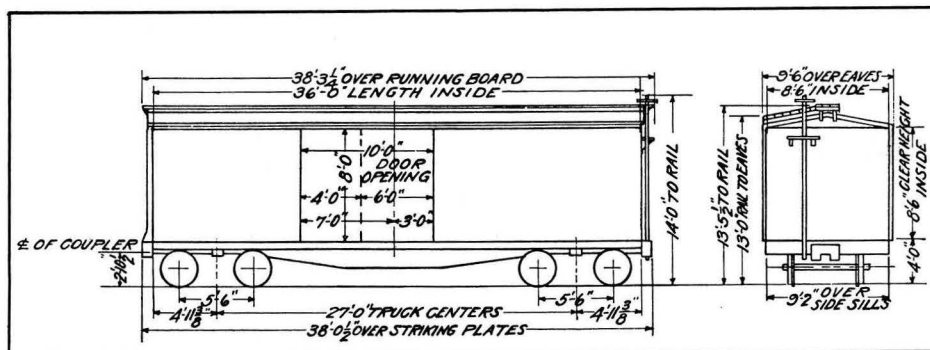
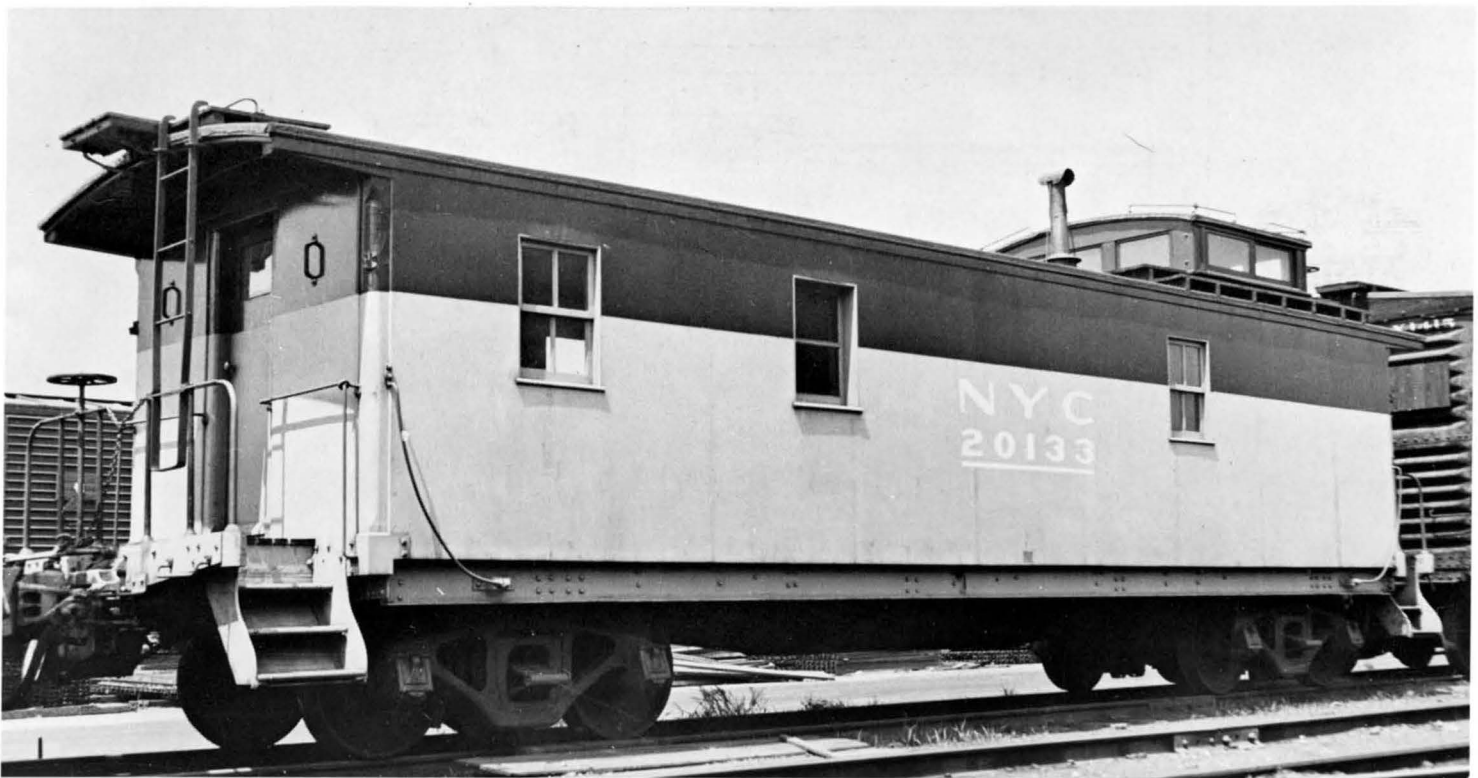
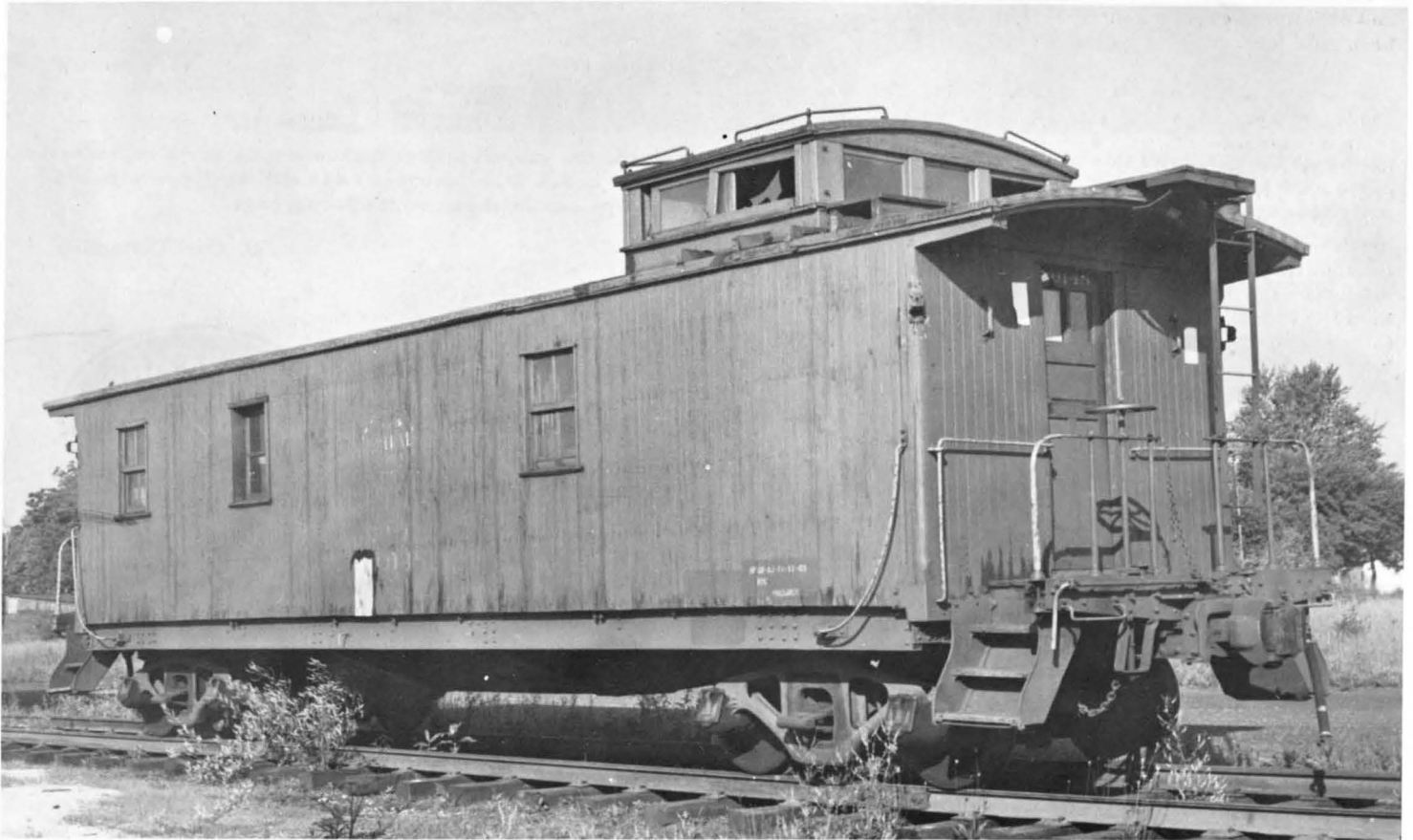


Diagram of Box cars from Lot Orders No. 236-B and 240-B which provided some of the underframes and hardware which were rebuilt into the cabooses shown above. These cars were originally constructed in 1910.



N. Y. C. "Pacemaker" caboose No. 20133 displays the vermillion and gray paint scheme which was applied in 1946 . Only five cabooses were so painted, 20112, 20117, 20129, 20132 and 20133, pictured above. Photo taken at Cleveland, Ohio on July 24, 1947. Note newer style lettering. Paul W. Prescott Collection



Weathered, with peeling paint and broken windows, N. Y. C. caboose X-0148, renumbered from it's original number (20148), sits on a siding abandoned and tagged for disposal in April, 1964 after "only" 20 years of service. Harold K. Vollrath Coll. Although the quality of this photograph leaves



Although the quality of this photograph leaves something to be desired, the subject matter makes it well worth reproduction. This rare photo shows N. Y. C. caboose No. 18161. It was originally a L. S. & M. S. caboose as is still equipped with it's original cupola. Later rebuilding resulted in the short "gun turret" type cupola shown on the facing page.

R. S. Curl Collection



Lake Shore & Michigan Southern
RAILWAY COMPANY.

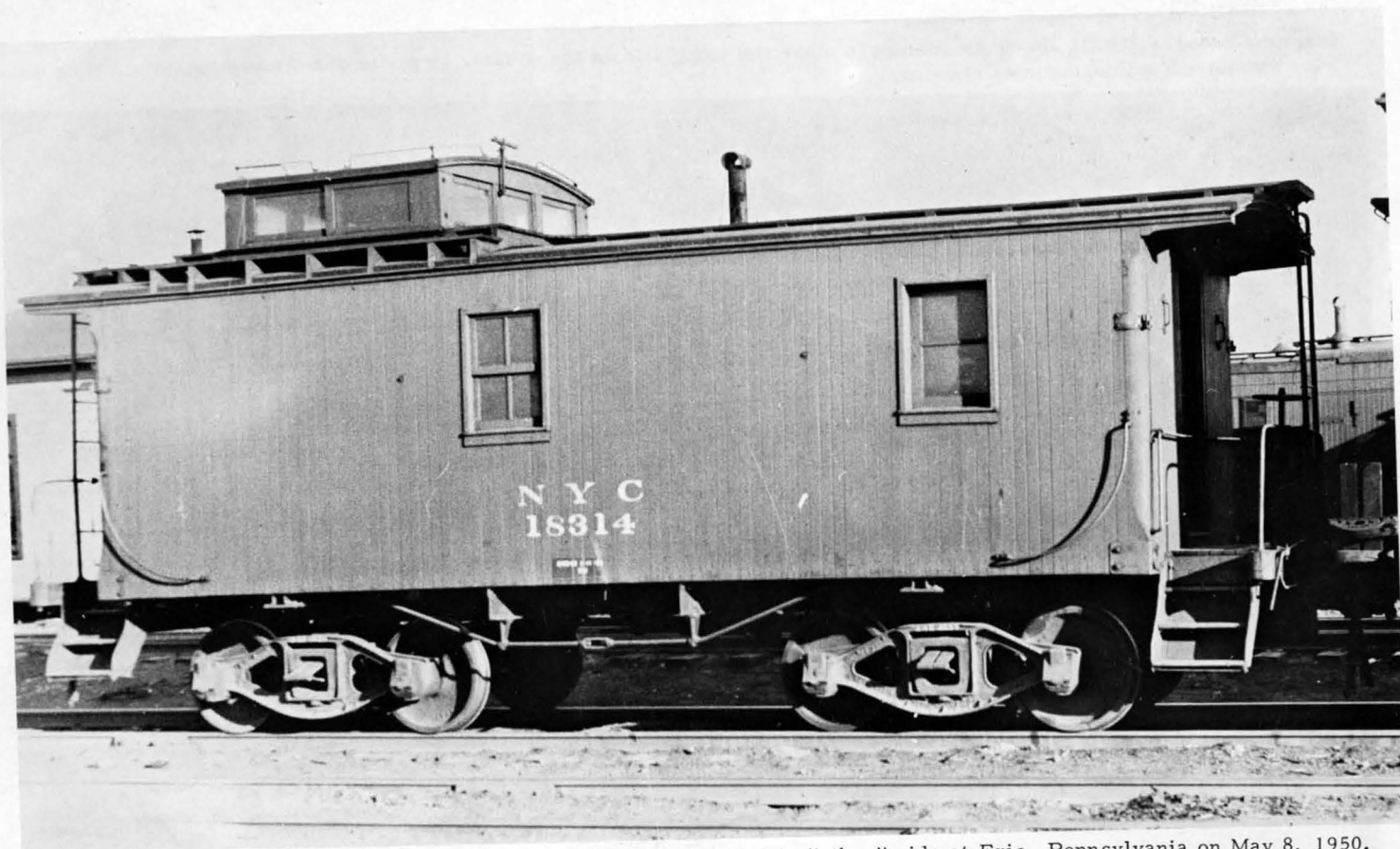


There was yet another caboose rebuilding project that was quite extensive, but was carried out over a number of years with very little solid evidence remaining to document that rebuilding. When the Lake Shore & Michigan Southern Railway was consolidated into the New York Central Lines in 1914, some attempt was made to standardize the newer L. S. & M. S. cabooses with those of the rest of the N. Y. C. Lines. Besides being shorter than the "Standard" N. Y. C. caboose by about five feet, they had only two windows on each side instead of three. Over the years it is believed that these cabooses also had their cupolas replaced with the shorter "gun turret" type favored by the Central because of operations in the East which demanded considerations in both motive power and rolling stock de-

sign which took into account the very tight clearances that the N. Y. C. was forced to operate under. Only sketchy records exist of these cars in many cases since it appears that their road numbers were mixed in with the same numbering series that were used on the "standard" N. Y. C. cabooses. In some cases, they appear to have been assigned numbers that once belonged to other cabooses that were scrapped, wrecked or destroyed by fire. Such records as do exist seem to indicate that most of the rebuilding of the ex-L. S. & M. S. cabooses occurred at the Collinwood Shops (East Cleveland) between 1914 and 1922. These cabooses, known as "Short Standards" to many N. Y. C. fans, were also long lived, with some serving right up to the very end of N. Y. C. wooden caboose operation.



N. Y. C. (Ex-L. S. & M. S.) caboose No. 18168 was originally constructed at Collinwood, Ohio in 1902. It is shown here at Stoneboro, Pennsylvania on January 12, 1952. Paul W. Prescott Collection

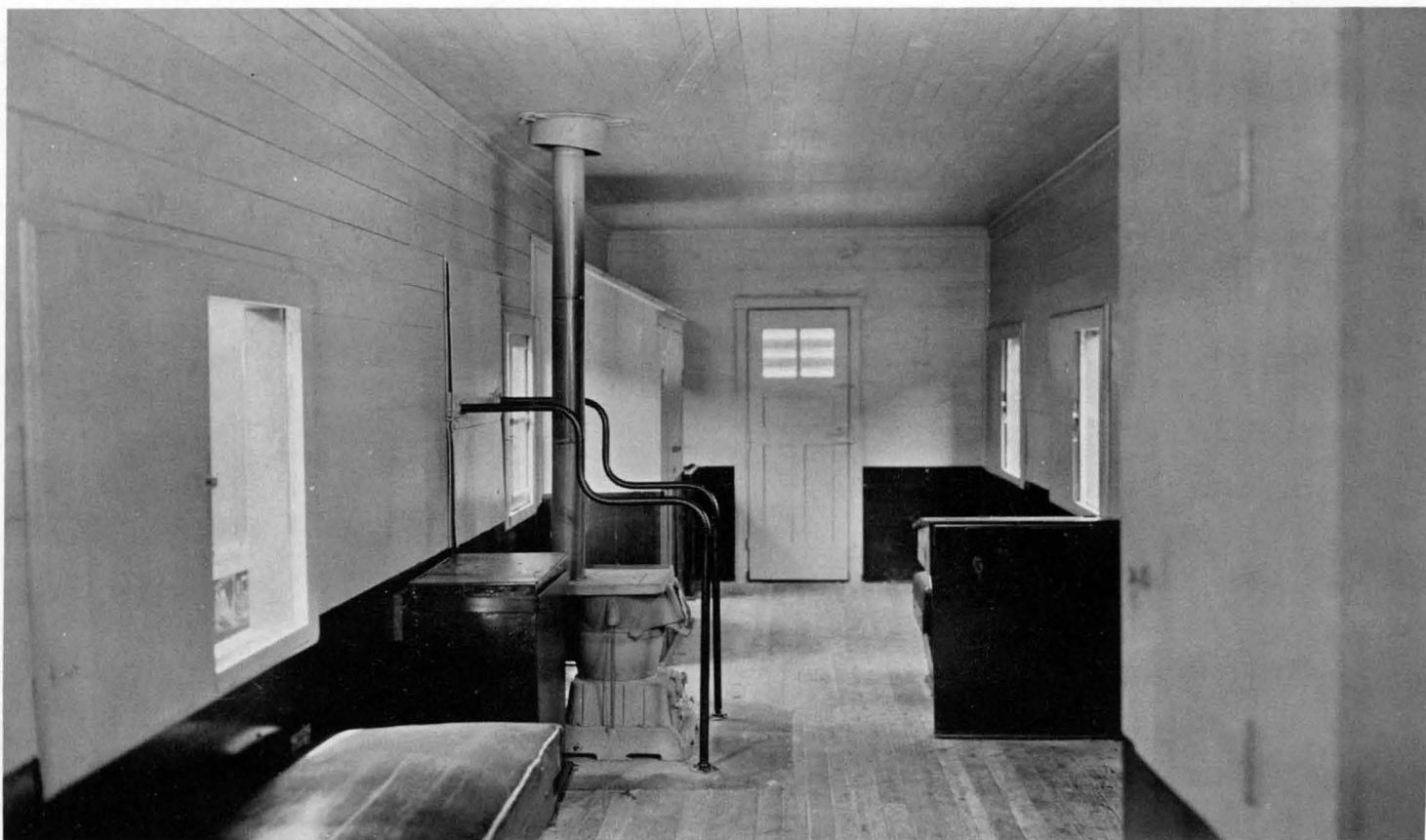


N. Y. C. caboose No. 18314, another Ex-L. S. & M. S. car, shows its "other" side at Erie, Pennsylvania on May 8, 1950. This car, which was built in 1906, was part of L. S. & M. S. numbering series 825 - 844. Paul W. Prescott Collection

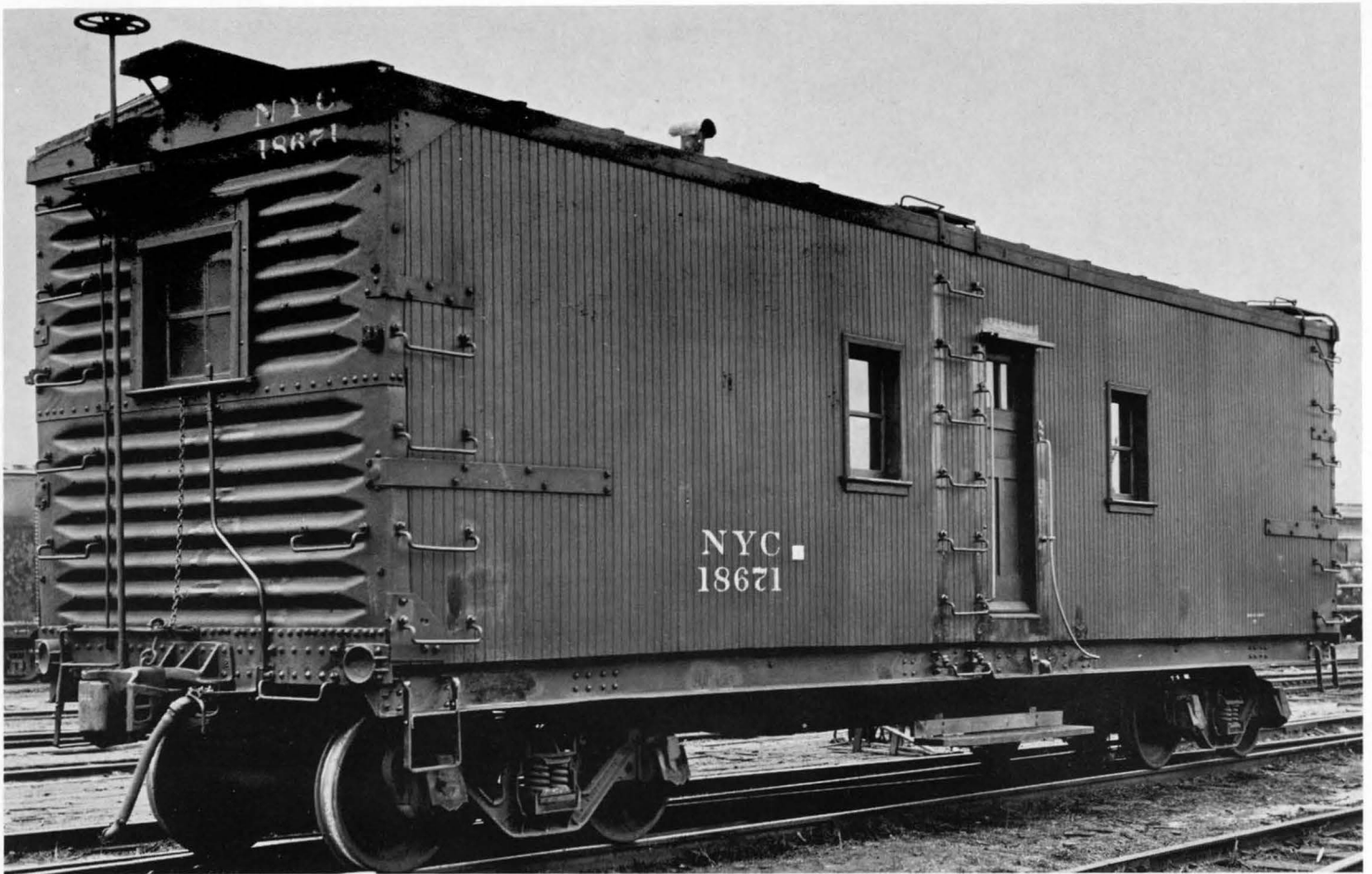
TEMPORARY SERVICE



Wartime caboose #18755 shows an attempt to make the end platform steps safer by giving them more "slant". Note smooth roof without rib reinforcements showing.



Interior view of N. Y. C. "temporary" caboose No. 18755 shows lowered ceiling and large wooden lockers mounted against the walls of the car. See back cover for end view of this car.



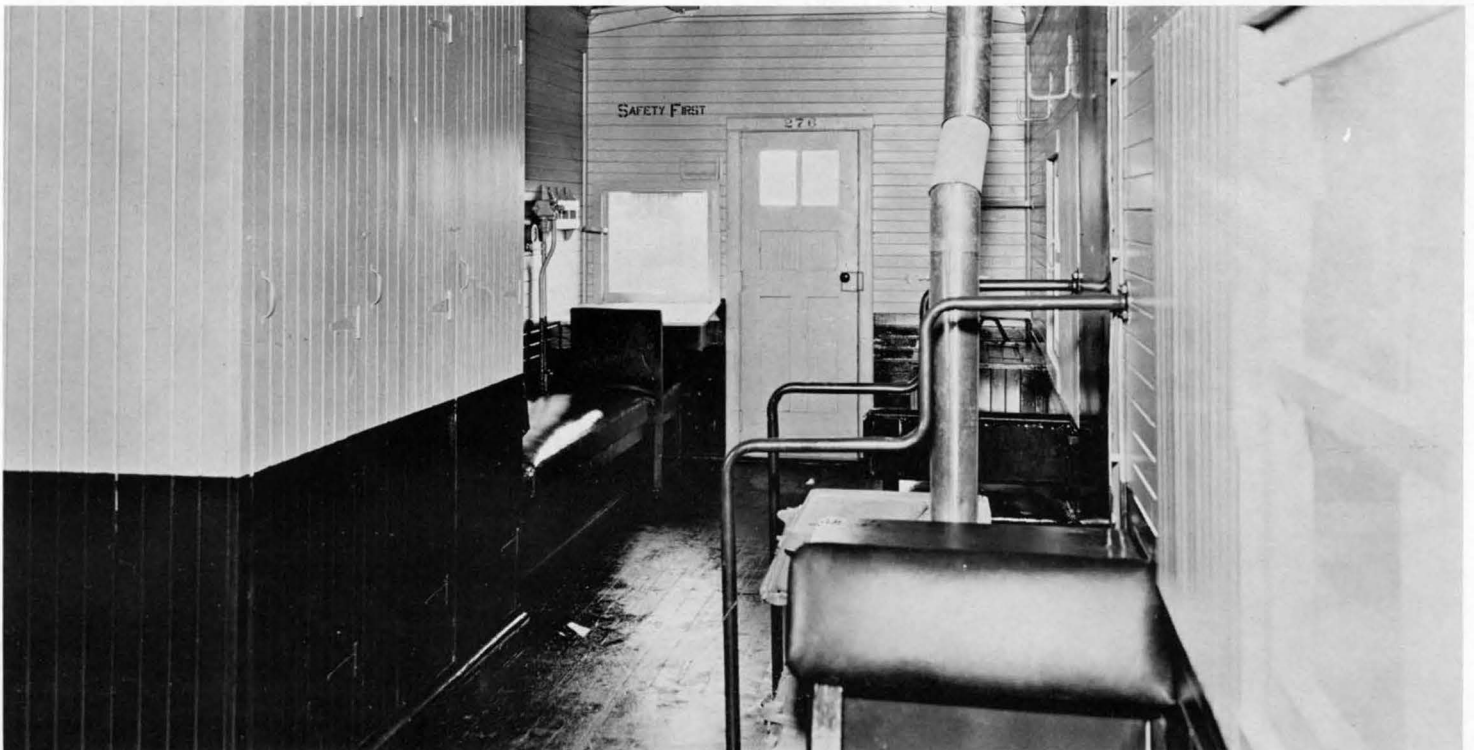
Another "quickie" caboose rebuilt produced by the crush of World War II traffic was caboose #18671. A wide "buckboard" step and steel ends with small windows cut in them keep this car from looking like revenue equipment.



Interior shot of #18671 reveals conductor's desk, coal stove and bunks. This could hardly be considered cozy.



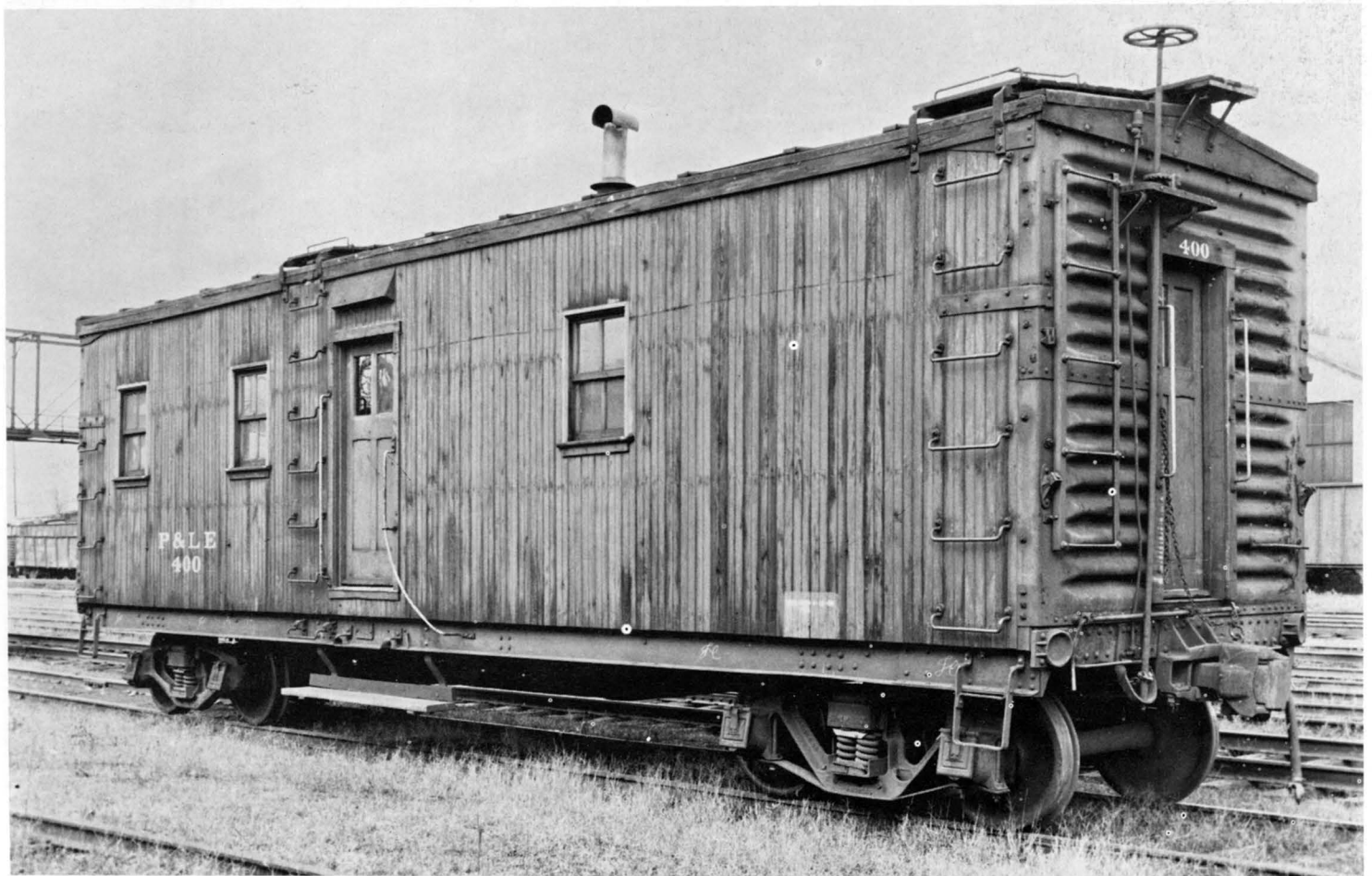
Official "Re-Builders" photo of I. H. B. temporary caboose #276. Box car ancestry is quite evident in this view.



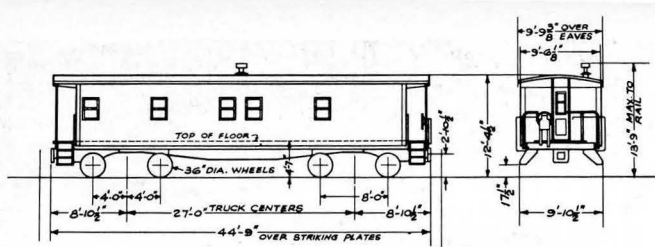
Interior view of I. H. B. caboose No. 276 shows original box car roof bracing, large wooden lockers and plenty of room.



P. & L. E. #413 illustrates one type of wartime caboose used by the railroad. This box car conversion featured end platforms and stirrup type steps.



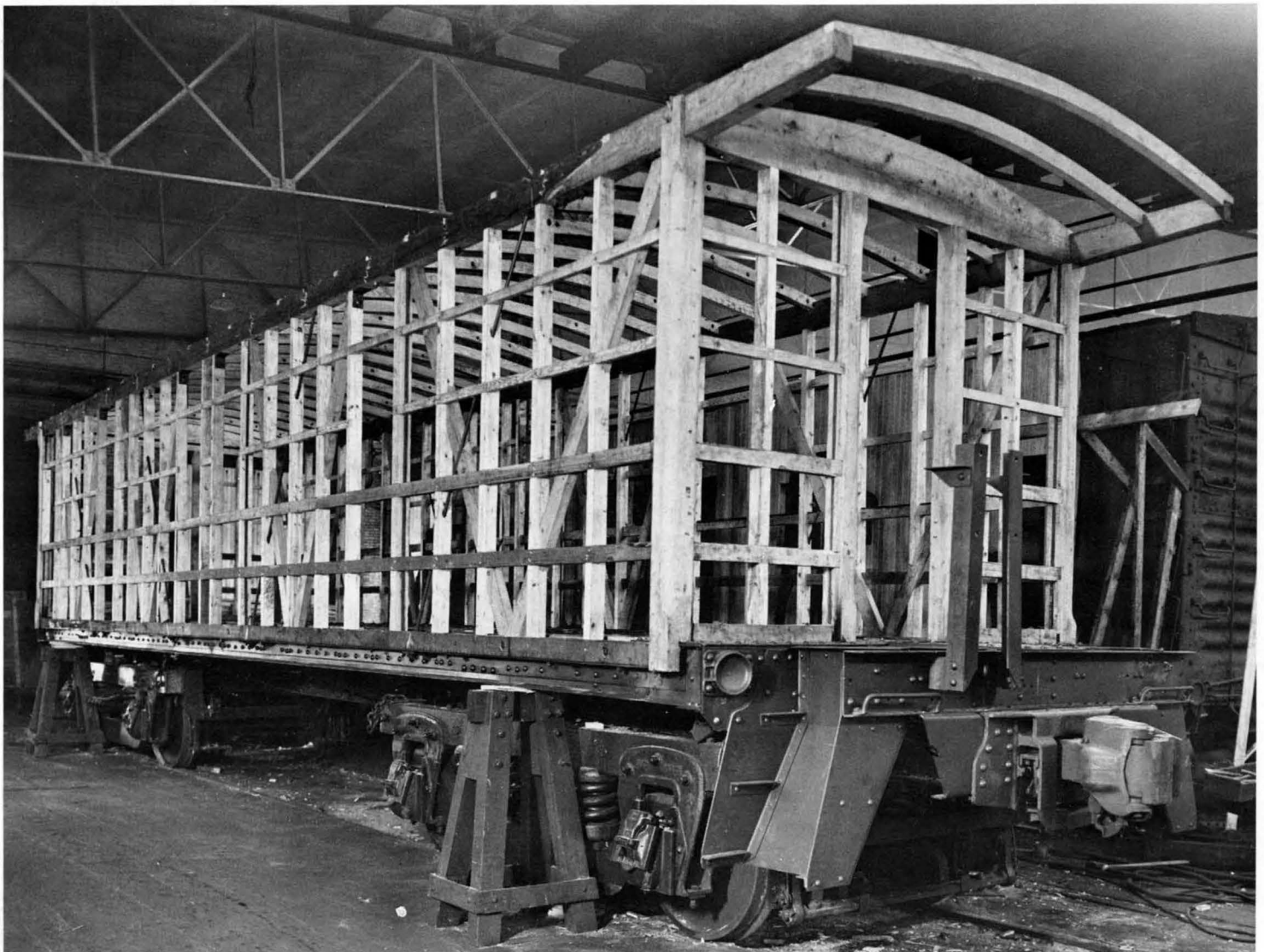
P. & L. E. temporary caboose #400 still looks more like a box car than a caboose. The two different types of trucks under the car are still equipped with coil springs rather than the usual softer riding leaf springs usually used on cabooses.



One type of car was used by the N. Y. C. which ordinarily would not be considered to be a caboose, was in actual operation and appearance close enough for us to include here. The N. Y. C. operated several different types of crew rider cars for mail and express passenger runs during the era of "the great steel fleet". Most of these cars were rebuilt from older passenger coaches that were sometimes modified with fewer windows, less seating capacity, and were equipped with either coal or oil stoves for heating. Some means of auxiliary heating was necessary due to the fact that these cars were frequently operated on the back end of long mail and express trains which often included many cars that either did not have steam train lines, or whose operation necessitated frequent switching that made coupling and uncoupling of the steam

train line unsafe and impractical. At least one type of rider car was built "from the ground up" for this purpose. In appearance it looked very much like a caboose without a cupola. They were built with heavy steel underframes, four wheel passenger car type trucks and were painted pullman green rather than the box car red used on freight train cabooses. They were short, not over 45 feet long in most cases, but they were large enough to carry a good number of passenger train crews as well as any "dead-heads"* who rode these trains. In addition to listing them as rider cars, the official N. Y. C. S. passenger diagram books list them as being "steel underframe cabooses", hence their inclusion in this caboose issue.

*railroad employees traveling on passes or on company business



Construction view of N. Y. C. rider car shows the very heavy wood construction used on these cars. No wonder these cars lasted for a good many years. Note steel rods bracing roof and sides.



Interior of rider car No. 2708 resembles slightly a passenger car of the 1860-1870 period. The accommodations certainly seem superior to those belonging to the temporary cabooses shown on preceding pages.



N. Y. C. rider car No. 2708, lot order No. 2168 was built in 1943. There were 20 cars in this series 2708 - 2727. This side of the car shows two windows, there were four windows on the other side as per the diagram at the top of the opposite page.



THE LAKE SHORE AND MICHIGAN SOUTHERN
RAILWAY COMPANY.



L. S. & M. S. caboose C-39 seems to almost dwarf 4-4-0 No. 108 in this early photo. The locomotive was originally named "Appachee" when it was built in 1869 by Mason Machine Co. It was retired between 1893-99. The caboose, unless it was destroyed by fire or train wreck probably survived longer. Note elaborate outside equalized trucks under the C-39.

Bob Lorenz Collection



L. S. & M. S. crew member seems very proud of his caboose, C-154 which is equipped with five side windows, a large cupola, and some very unusual looking trucks with the usual leaf springs.

Bob Lorenz Collection



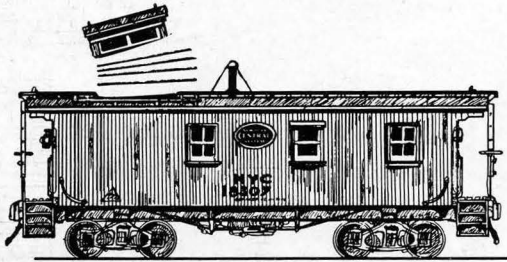
B. & A. caboose No. 1299 at first glance resembles the "standard" N. Y. C. caboose covered earlier, but the cupola appears to be taller, the steps slightly different, and with the addition of an underframe tool box and large wheeled unusual trucks these cabooses have an appearance all their own. There were 80 cabooses in this series which were originally numbered 1117 - 1299 and were renumbered 17000 - 17081 in 1952. This photo was taken at Rensselaer, N. Y. on June 2, 1940.
Colonel C. B. McCoid Collection

Boston & Albany
RAILROAD.

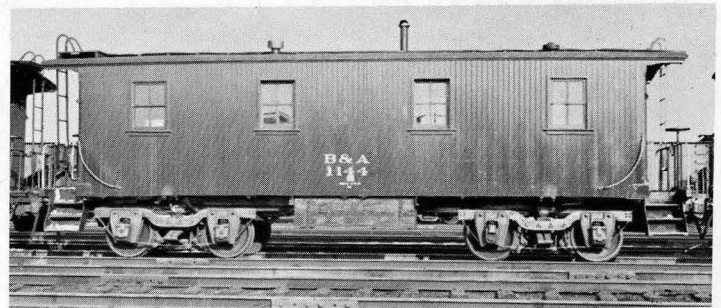


Boston & Albany caboose No. 1179 is shown here at East Pittsfield, Mass. on February 21, 1937. Note the open slats which provide the backstop on the caboose steps.
George E. Votava Collection

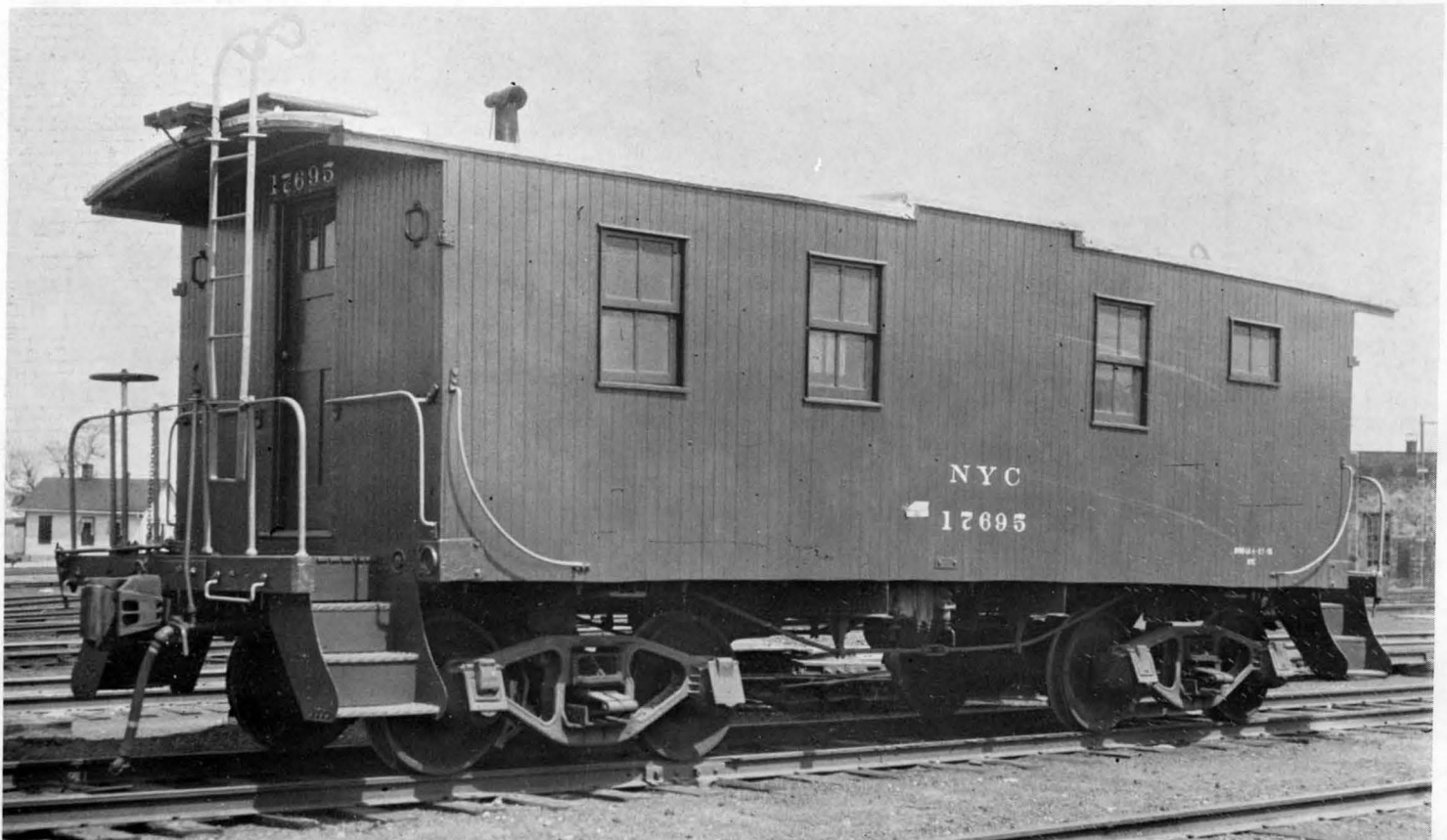
THE CASE OF THE MISSING CUPOLA!



As freight cars grew taller and wider over the years, the New York Central System, along with many other railroads, discovered that in most cases the cupola was worse than useless. Beside the fact that the crew was now unable to see over the roofs of many of the cars that they had to handle, the extra windows of the cupolas were proving useful only for giving vandals another aiming point for throwing rocks and stones and giving the N. Y. C. increasing maintenance costs for their wooden caboose fleet. As a result of this, as cabooses required shopping many cupola windows were simply boarded over and then painted. If the cupola itself was in bad shape and in need of heavy repairs, it was often removed with the resulting area boarded over to match the original roof contour. The resulting rebuilds were usually assigned to yard or transfer service. The accompanying photos prove that this type of surgery was not confined to one type of caboose on the New York Central System, and will help to illustrate, "The Case Of The Missing Cupolas".



Boston & Albany caboose No. 1144 is shown here at West Springfield, Mass on July 18, 1946. Compare lettering & window layout of earlier view of 1144's "other side" seen on facing page. Col. C. B. McCoid Collection



N. Y. C. caboose No. 17695 was originally a Louisville & Jefferson Bridge R. R. car. It was built to C. C. C. & St. L. blueprints during the 1920's and is shown here in Louisville, Ky. on April 22, 1956. According to available records, this car was retired in July, 1964. Note "shortened" side window and platform remaining on roof showing where the tall cupola was once located.



Boston & Albany caboose No. 1144 stands on a siding at North Adams, Mass. The date is February 22, 1937. This caboose was originally constructed in the B. & A. shops in 1924. George E. Votava Collection



N.Y.C. caboose No. 17070 was originally Boston & Albany No. 1289 before its renumbering in 1952. Notice the extra roof vent stacks added when the cupola was removed and that the unusual B. & A. caboose trucks have been replaced by the N.Y.C. "T" section caboose truck. The date is September 12, 1954, the place is Framingham, Mass. George E. Votava Collection

1875 5

