

The Other, Lesser Known Livestock Railroad Transport Car

*Presented with the Invaluable Assistance of
Kaylee Zheng, Tom O'Connor, and Frank Grill*

A Brief History of Transporting Live Poultry By Rail During the Late 19th and Early 20th Century



Poultry Car
Modeling
Implications



Transporting Live Poultry

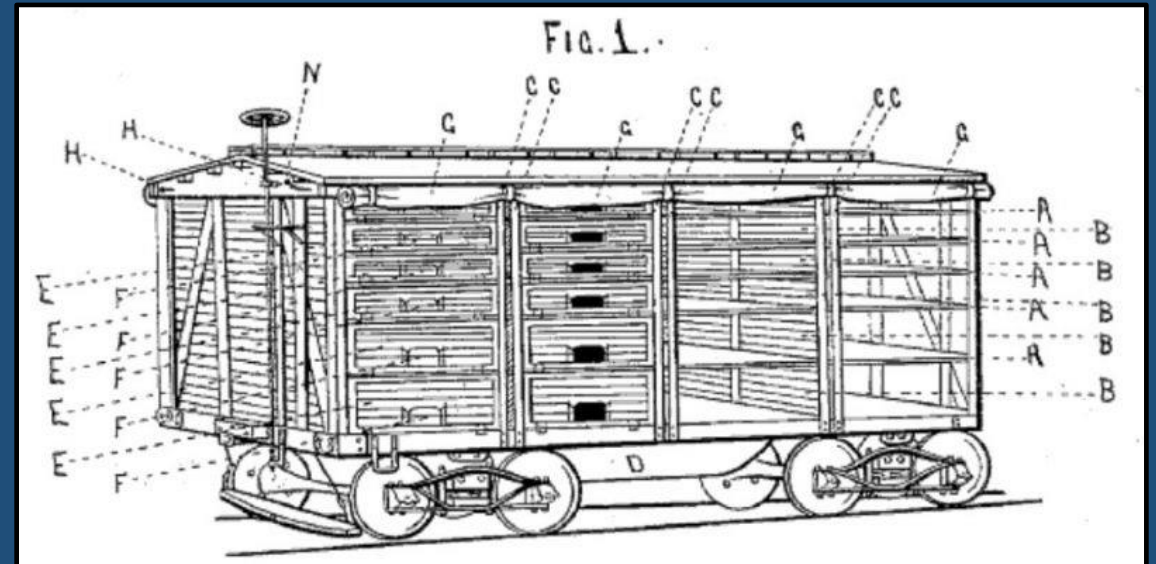
- Traditional stock cars not suited for poultry transport
 - Chickens placed in coops and stacked anywhere
 - Not fed or given water enroute → shrinkage
 - Minimal ventilation around coop due to overcrowding
 - Lots of DOA (typically 5-10%) → lost revenue

The Poultry Car

William Jenkins- Travelling Freight Agent for Erie Railroad

James Streeter- Poultry dealer in Muncie, Indiana

Poultry Transport Rail
Car patent approved
on August 26, 1884



Jenkin's Poultry Car

Features of the Jenkin's car:

end wall hatches for ventilation and temperature control

mesh screen sides for ventilation

overhead water tank

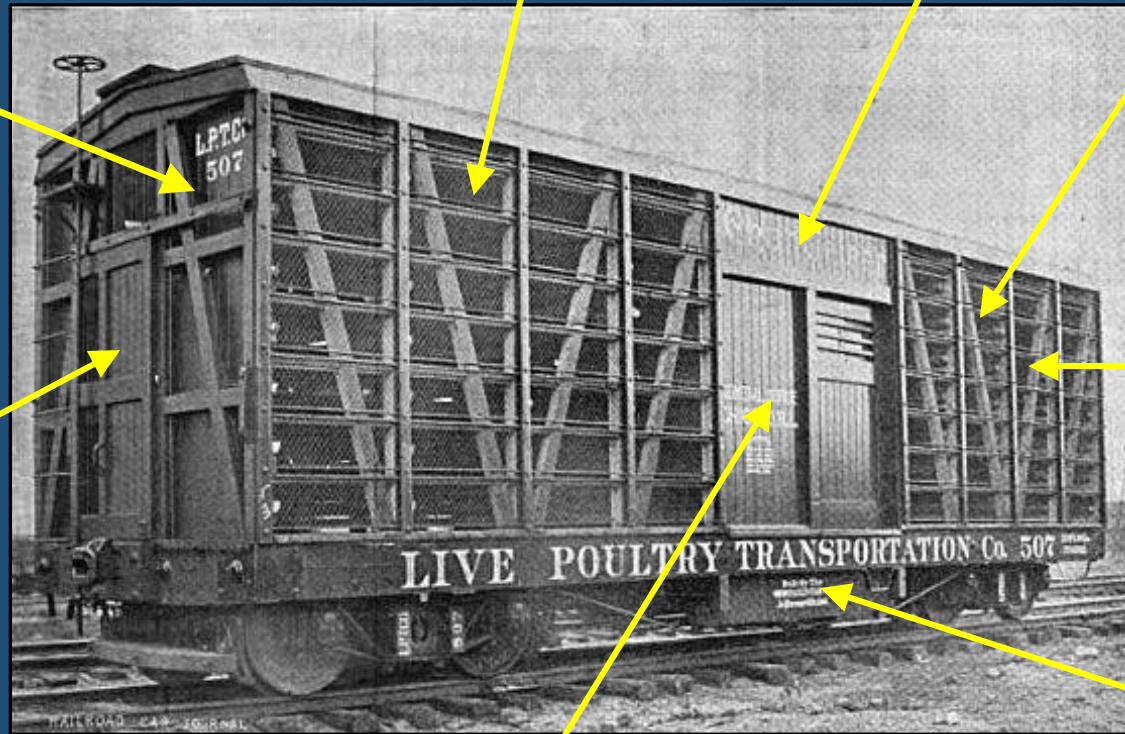
each coop had trough for feed and water

thin curtains can be attached for some cold and inclement weather protection

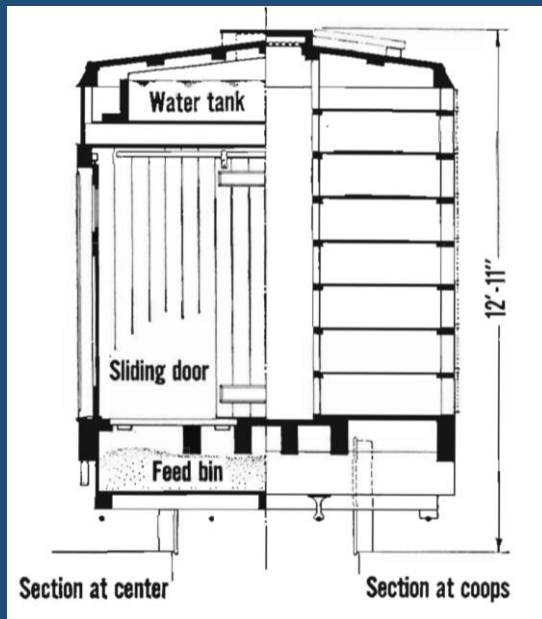
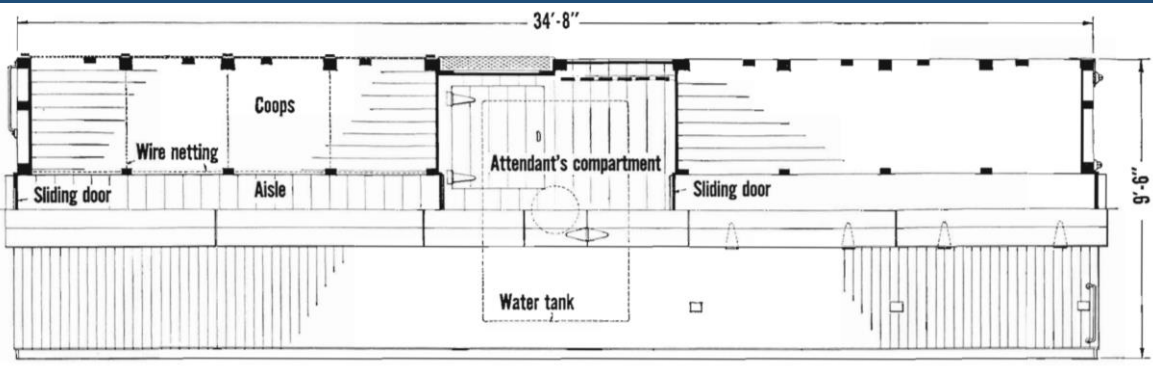
end doors for temperature control

feed bin storage

stateroom for attendant with sink, stove, and bed



Car Specifications



Center Aisle Width

28"

Stateroom Area

40 sq. ft

**Water Tank
Capacity**

750 gal.

Feed Bin Capacity

**50
bushels**

Car Base Weight

8 tons

Poultry Car - Capacities

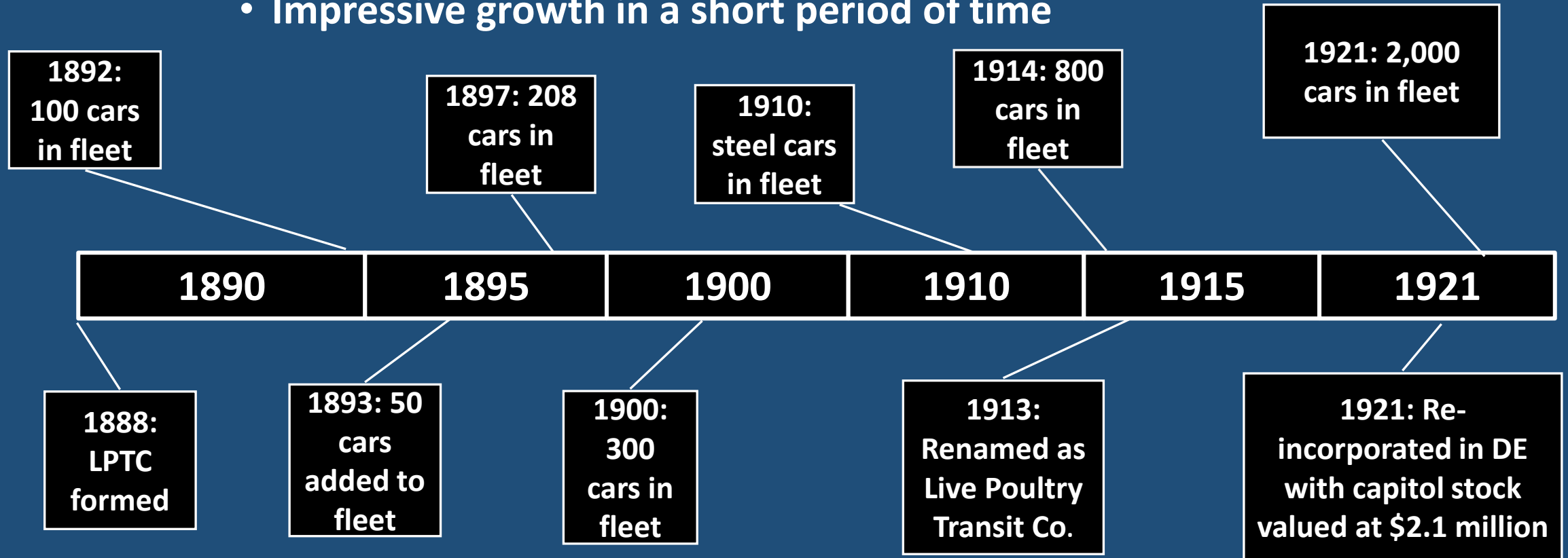
- 8 decks with 116 coops (4,000 \pm 500 chickens)
- each coop measured 48" x 36" x 13" (L x W x H)
- alternating floors removable for larger birds (i.e. turkeys, geese)
 - capable of 2,000 geese or 1,400 turkeys
- capacity increased to 128 coops within a year
 - up to 4,608 chickens (roughly 35 chickens per coop)
- stateroom had capacity for additional 432 chickens



Timeline of Live Poultry Transportation

❖ Jenkins Live Poultry Transportation Company formed in 1888

- Renamed to Live Poultry Transportation Company
- Serviced US (except Maine) and parts of Canada
- Impressive growth in a short period of time

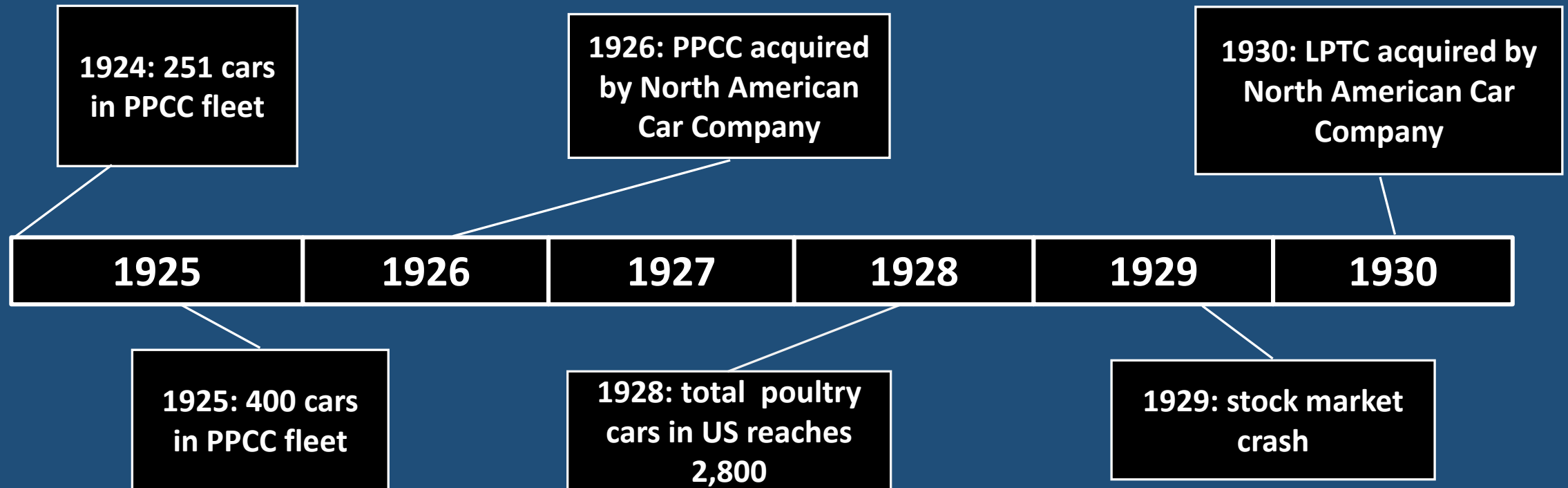


Timeline Continuation

❖ LPTC held a near monopoly until 1924

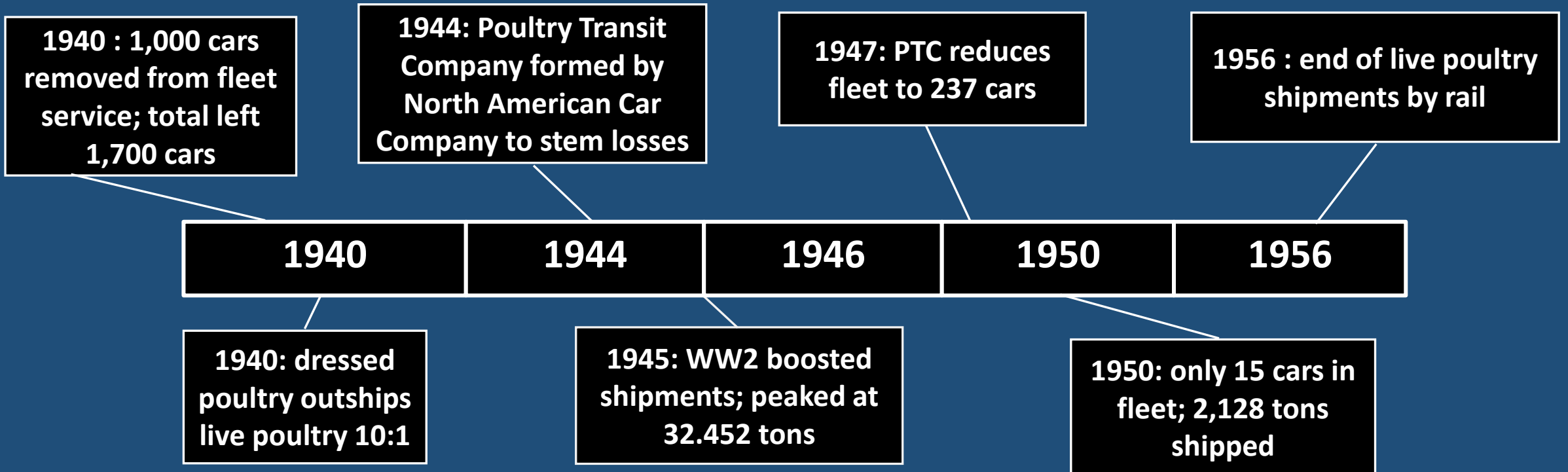
- Continental Live Poultry Car Company (1890)
- American Live Poultry Car Company (1910)

❖ Palace Poultry Car Company formed in 1924



Timeline Continuation

- ❖ **Despite the Great Depression operations continued**
 - Demand for live poultry dropped dramatically
- ❖ **Increased competition from trucking and improved refrigeration technology**
 - 1928: 51% poultry shipped by rail
 - 1940: 27% poultry shipments by rail



Poultry Cars on the Rails



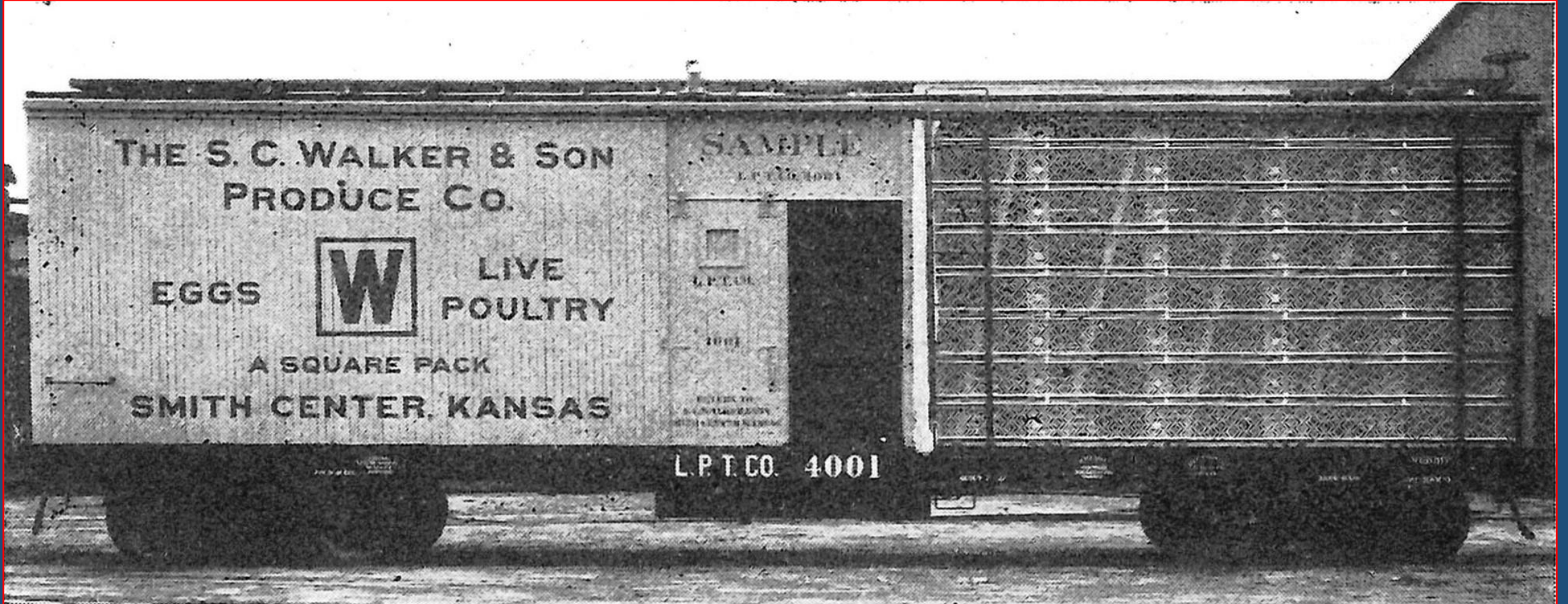
Poultry Cars on the Rails



Poultry Cars on the Rails

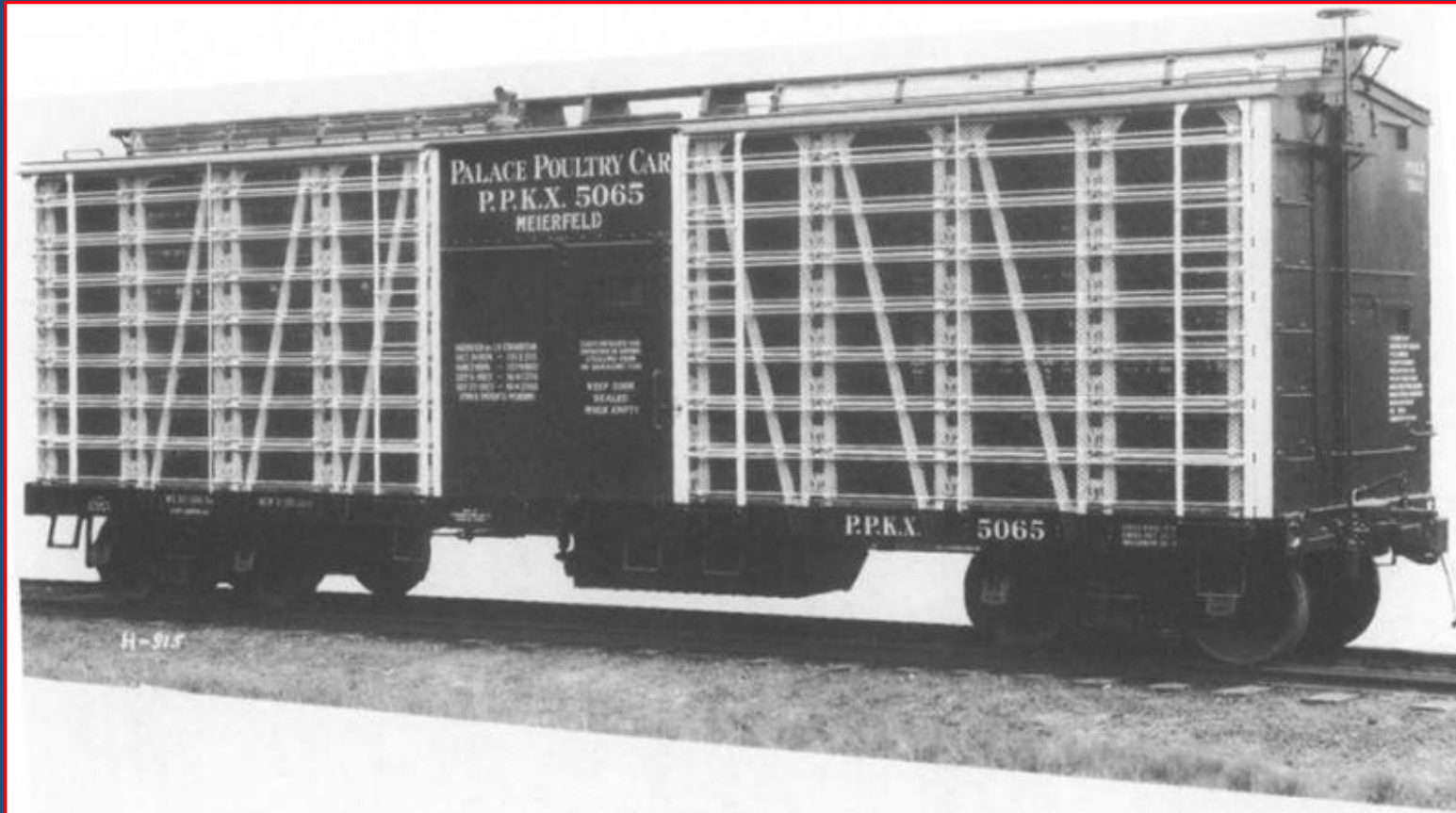


Poultry Cars on the Rails



New L. P. T. car recently put into service on Rock Island. One-half of car is refrigerated for eggs and the other half used for live poultry

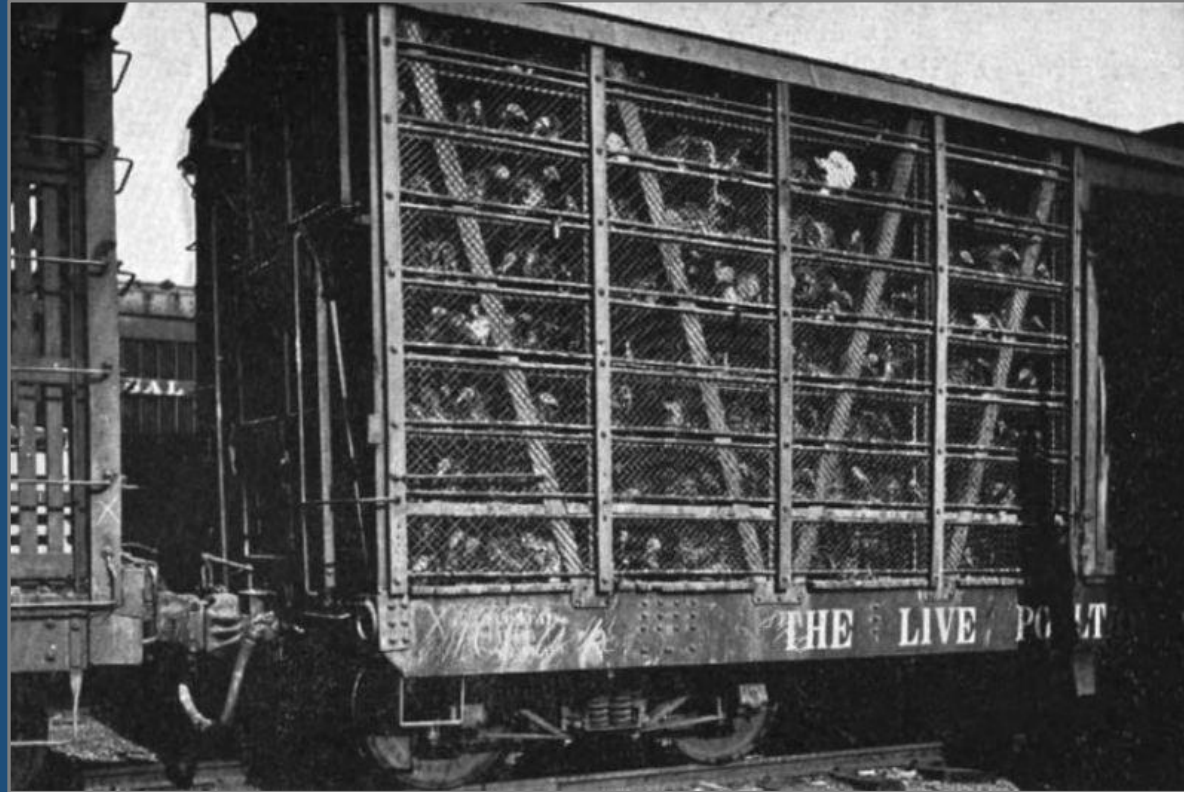
Poultry Cars on the Rails



Palace Poultry Car no. 5065

The Palace Poultry Car Company was formed in 1924 as was the only real competition for the Live Poultry Transit Company. Their cars were similar in function, but rode higher on the rails. Both companies would eventually become part of the North American Car Company, with a fleet of more than 3,000 poultry cars roaming the nation. Photo from Agricultural History, Summer 1989.

Poultry Cars on the Rails



Turkeys and More

Turkeys were routinely shipped in live poultry cars until the 1920s. This car belongs to the Live Poultry Transit Company. Photo from the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

Poultry Cars on the Rails



Loading Chickens Bound for Market

Here you can see a live poultry car being utilized for its intended purpose. These cars could haul as many as 5,000 chickens, depending on their size. The cars would sometimes roll along the line, stopping in various farm communities along the railroad to pick up chickens. Once the car was full, the chickens would be sent to market in a large city such as Chicago or New York. Photo from the Poultry Herald, October 1919.

Live Poultry Shipment Factoids

- Poultry cars ran the rails throughout the US and parts of Canada.
 - Known as 'cackle cars' due to their sight and sound
 - Common sight on fast priority freights into cities
- New York City were prime market areas for live poultry
 - Represented 60% of all live poultry shipments in 1922
 - Jewish population consumed 80% of shipments in the city
 - Holiday season 60-80 cars arrived daily (nearly double the normal rate)
- Highly profitable freight for the railroads
 - Single car generated approximately \$1,350 per run
 - East coast routes generally higher than west coast routes

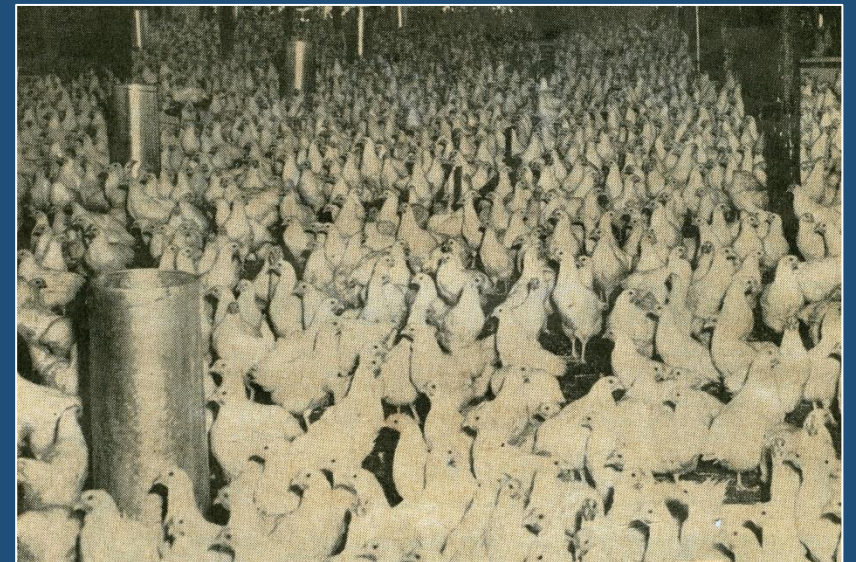
Life on the Road for Car Attendants

- Attendants (carmen) tended to be young and single men
 - Generally on the rails for three weeks
 - No guarantee of a return trip home
- Rough working conditions
 - Smell, noise and little comfort in the cars
 - Laborious
 - ✓ Helped farmer pack, crate, load, and unload
 - ✓ Fed and watered chickens enroute
 - ✓ Tended the wounded and dead chickens (usually tossed out of the car)
 - ✓ Cleaned out the car after unloading coops
 - Had to learn how to cook their own food (chickens?)



Life on the Road for Car Attendants

- Benefits outweighed the work
 - Decent pay with bonus opportunities
 - ✓ Sold extra fresh laid eggs and leftover feed
 - ✓ Starting weight versus delivery weight yielded a bonus or pay cut
 - Fresh eggs often consumed enroute
 - Safer work conditions than most industries at the time
- Theft not uncommon
 - Carmen pay based on starting weight
 - Carmen were known to steal chickens, eggs, feed.
 - Carmen known to stuff stones into chickens to increase their weight and pad their bonus



Transporting Chickens by Truck



Modeling Poultry Cars

Ready to Run- Bachmann

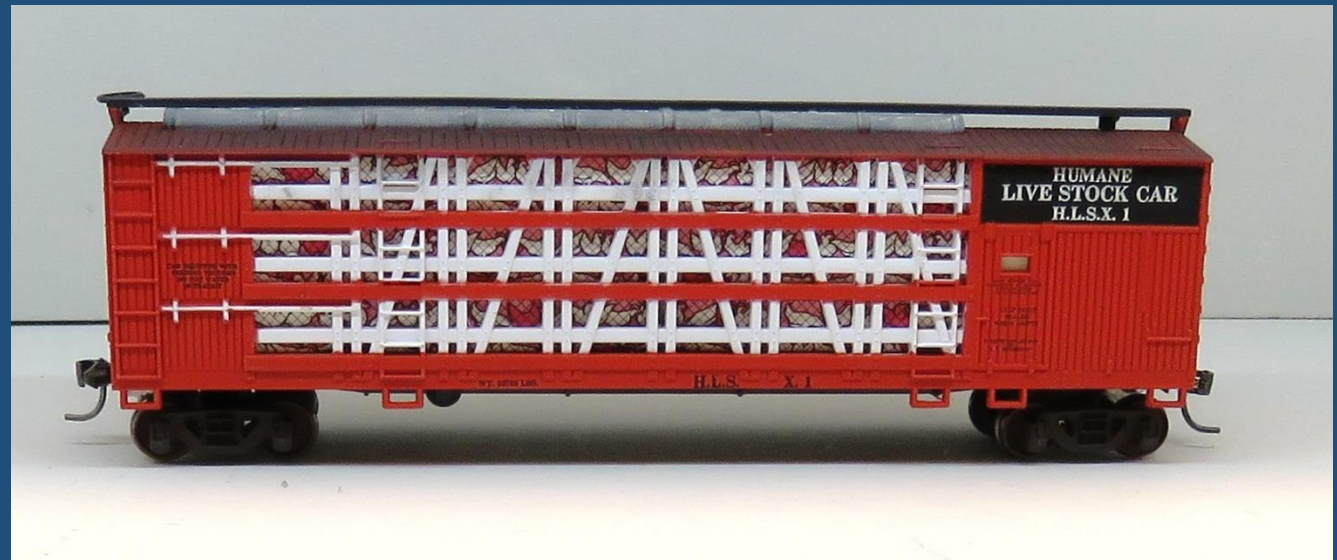
Ready to Run- Lionel

Craftsman kit by Ambroid

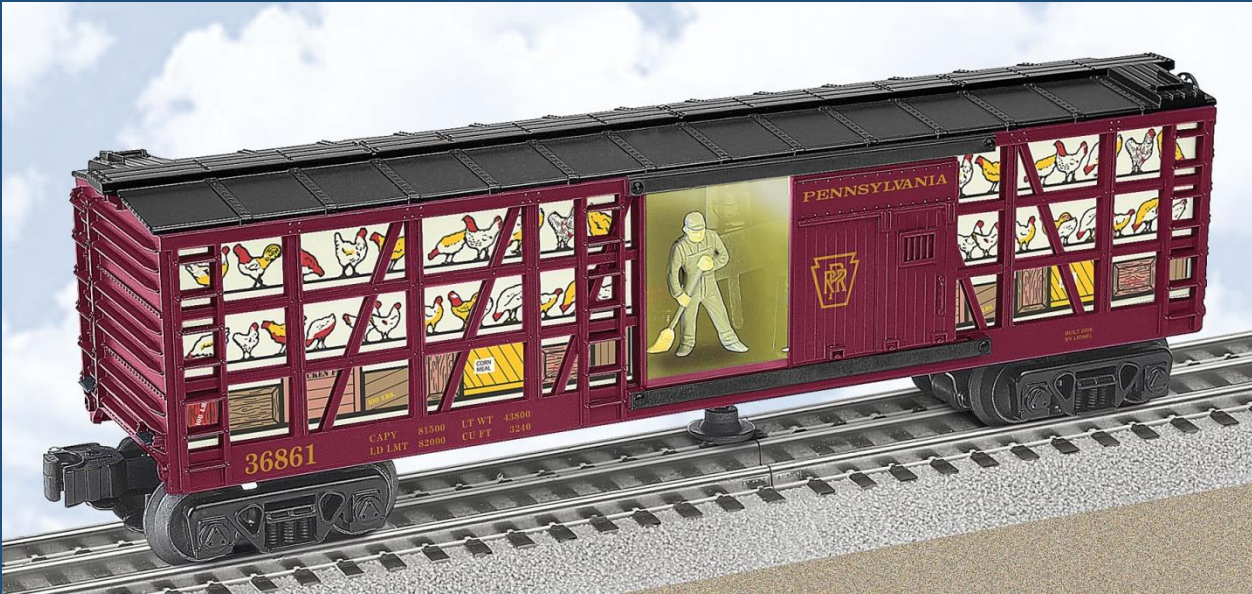
Overland Models brass kit

Scratchbuild

Bachman HO Poultry Cars



Lionel Poultry Cars



O scale



HO scale

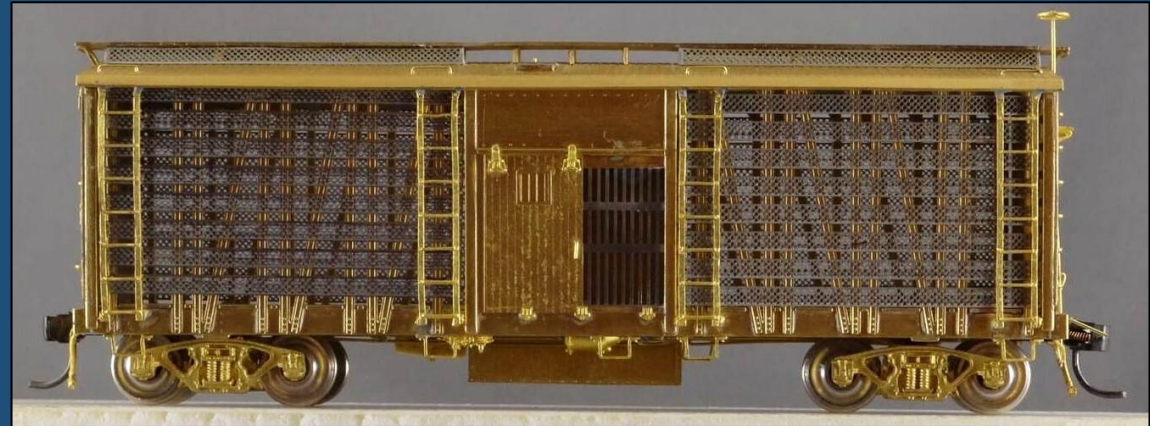
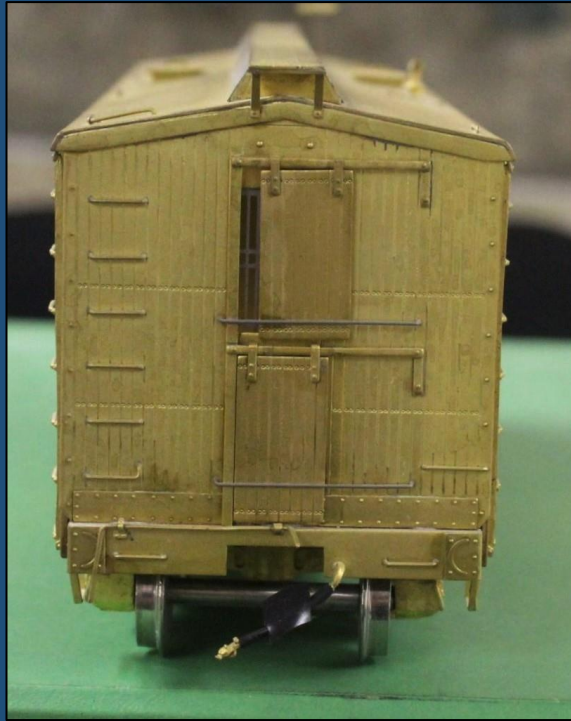
Garden Railway- G Scale

Chicken Train - Live Poultry Transit!



LSOL.com

Overland Poultry Car



Overland Models, Inc.

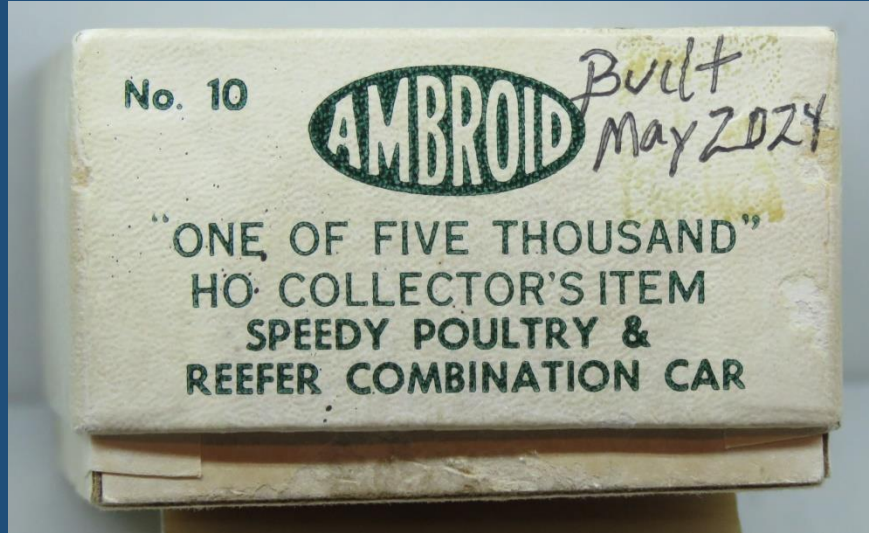
RR 12, Box 445, Muncie, IN 47302 U.S.A.

Palace Poultry Car

Era 1920-1950

OMI- 1388/HO Scale Made in Korea, by M.S.Models

Ambroid HO Model



NEW FOR THE FEW!

Strictly limited run — latest in Ambroid's popular "One of 5000" series. Half the car for poultry, half for refrigerated meat and dairy products. This is one of the most unusual kits in the "5000" series — and will never be repeated! Very colorful: white body, green ends, roof and doors, black underframe. Kit complete with trucks, decals, tube of Ambroid . . . only \$5.25 retail.

PLENTY FOR ALL!

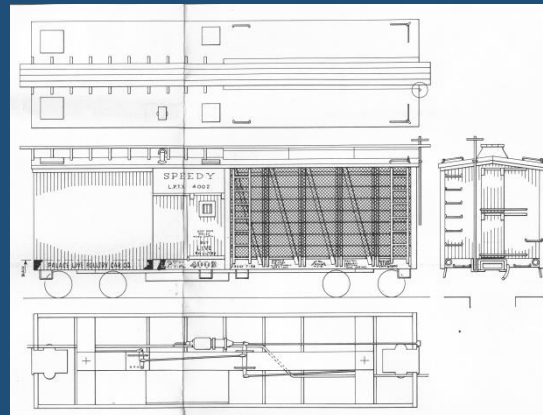
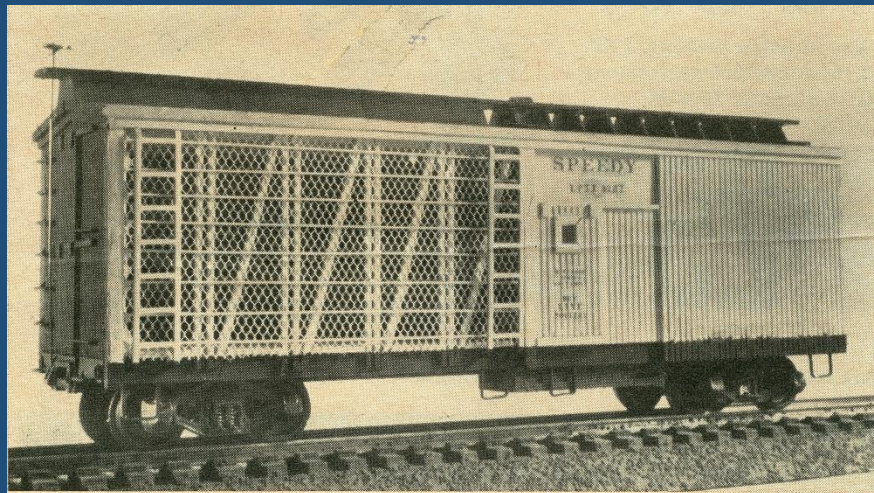
Not limited — we hope we killed enough of these famous old box cars so most serious railroaders can have one. Six roads (two shown); can be made with either 7 or 9 punch. Super-detailed in seasoned hardwood, complete with trucks, decals, tube of Ambroid . . . only \$3.75 retail.

ORDER YOURS NOW!

AMBROID Company
BOX 30, E. WEYMOUTH 88, MASS.
Makers of modeling's most popular cement

April 1963

53



Ambroid HO Models by Tom O'Connor



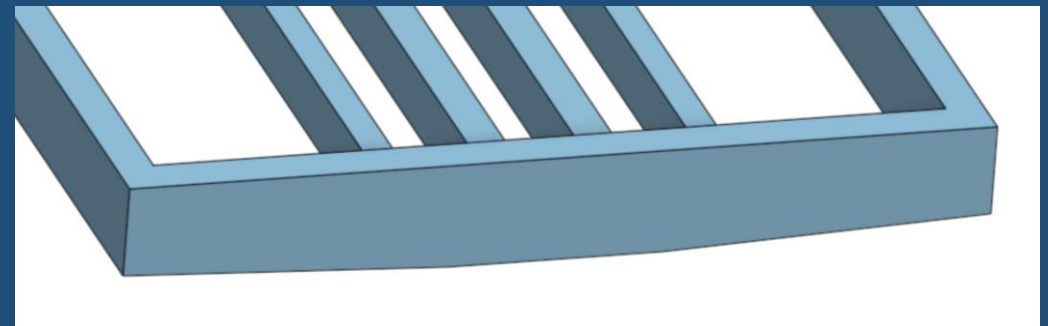
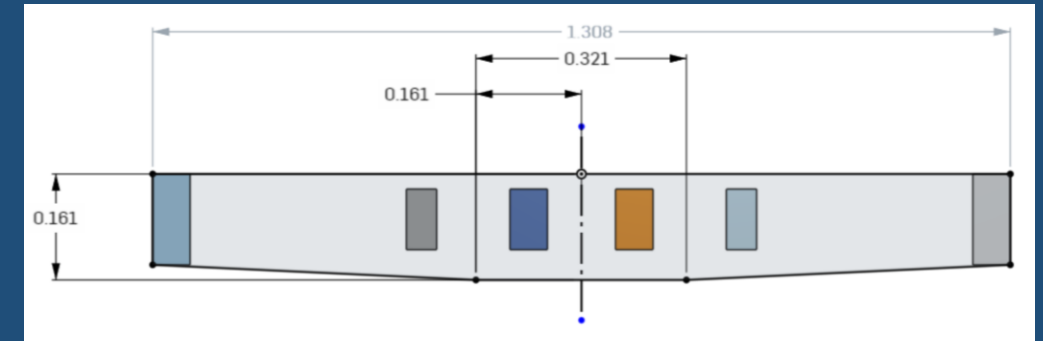
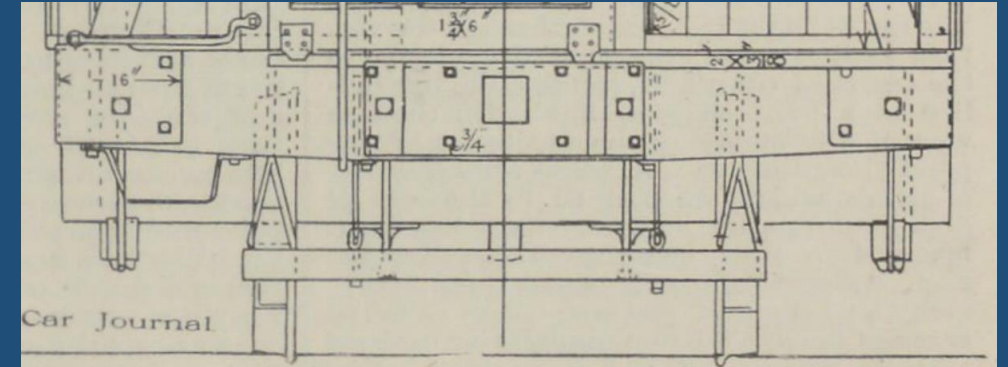
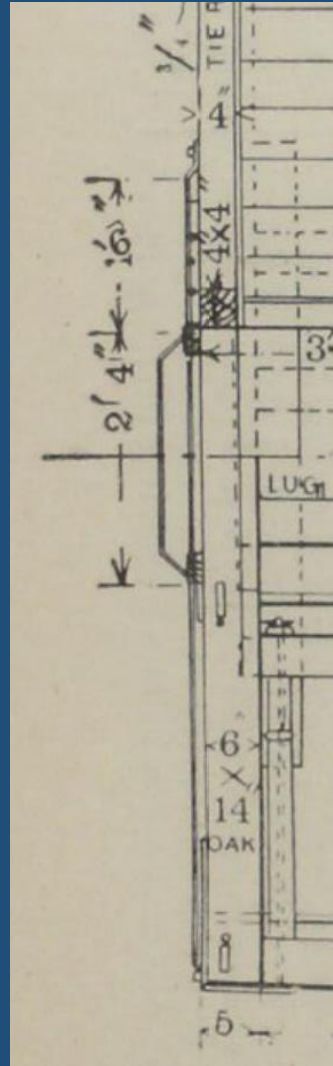
model
painted by
Frank Grill

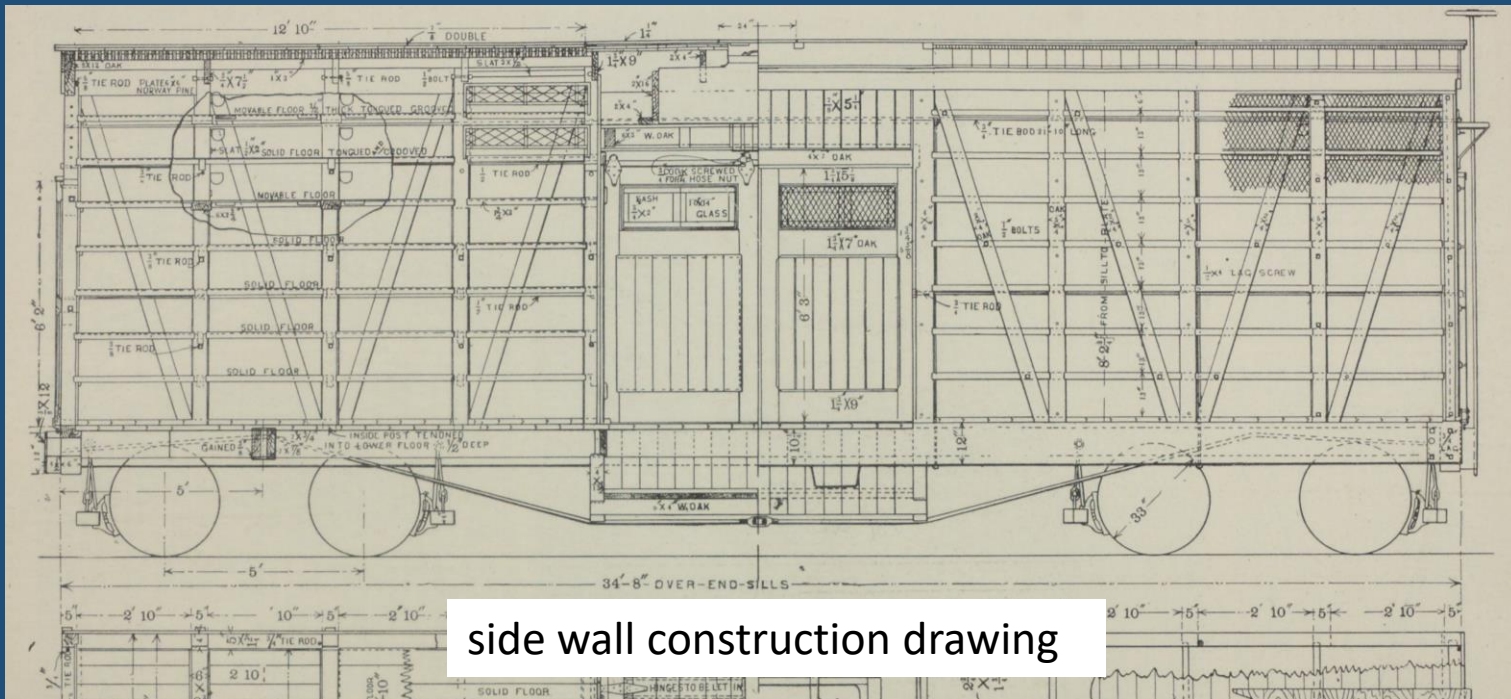


Kaylee Zheng's Poultry Car

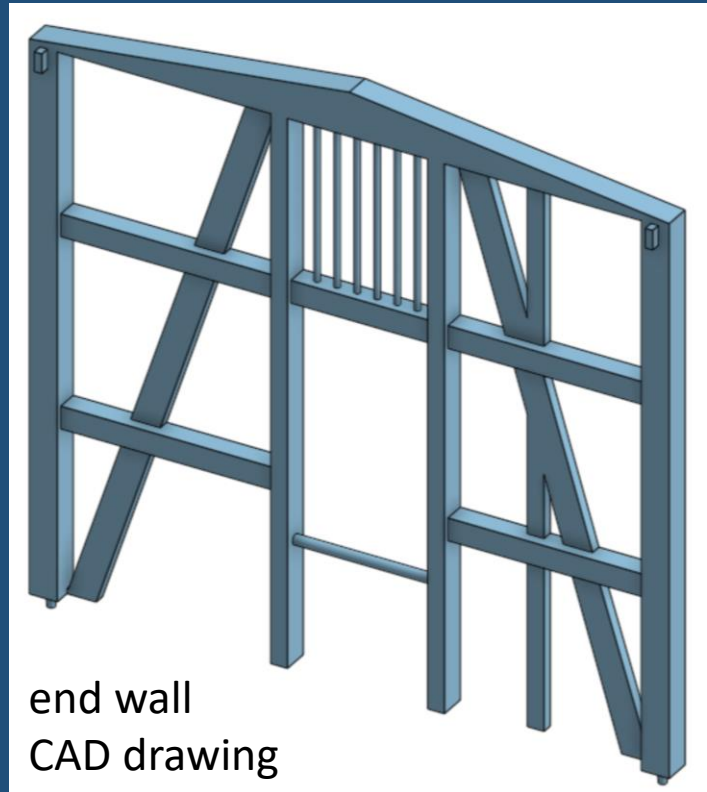
Kaylee was commissioned by a fellow model railroader to build a fleet of 1910 era poultry cars. After researching and planning the car layout, she began CAD drawings for each section and subsection. Sad to say her commission was withdrawn and she never built any cars.

underframe plan

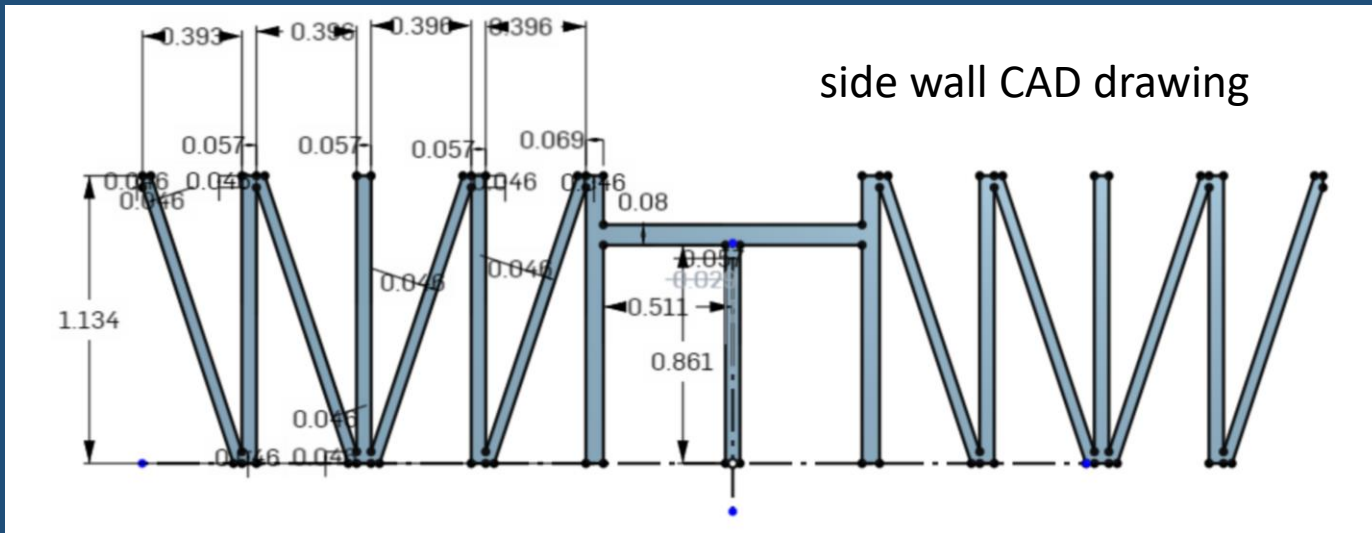




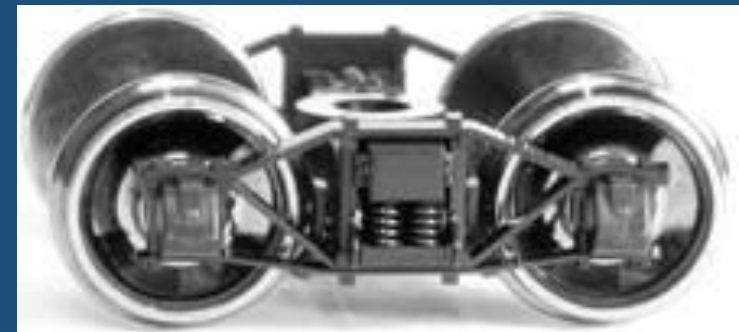
side wall construction drawing



end wall
CAD drawing

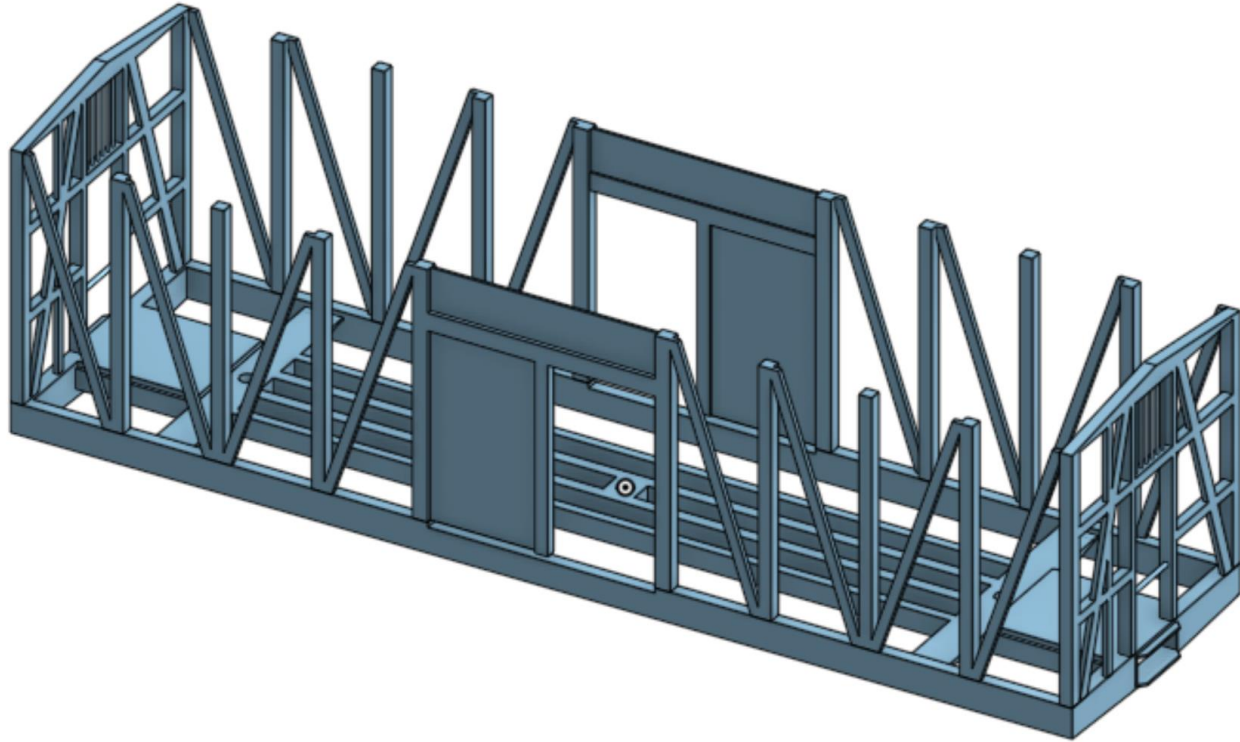


side wall CAD drawing

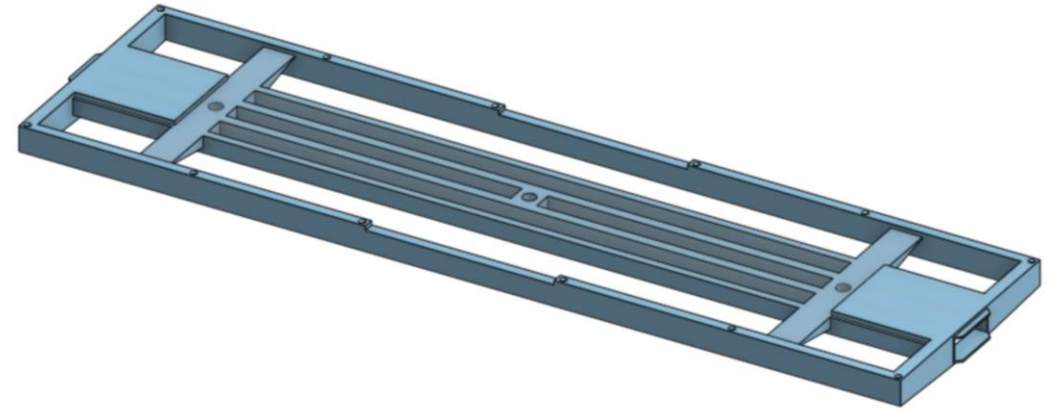


Tahoe Model Works

TMW-103 or TMW-203
AC&F Archbar trucks



floor, side and end wall CAD drawing



floor frame CAD drawing

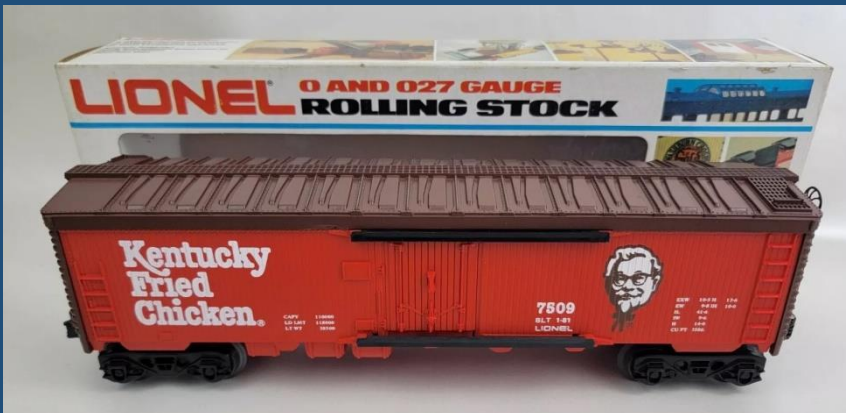


progress until the commission was withdrawn

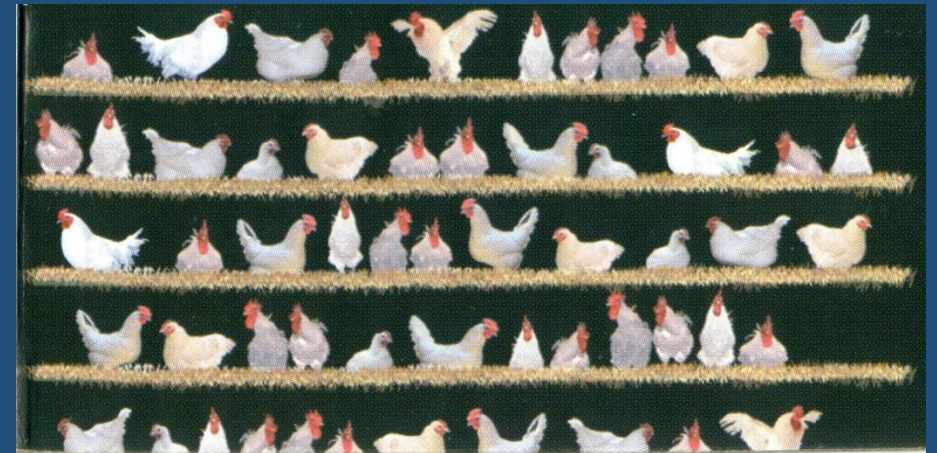
Odds & Ends



Walthers HO
Poultry/Egg Reefer— The
next generation of
poultry cars that carried
dressed poultry



Billboard
Reefer or
KFC bucket
delivery??



chickens for sale

Questions.....

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