

A PUBLICATION OF THE IVES TRAIN SOCIETY

Sept 2014



IVES TRACKS

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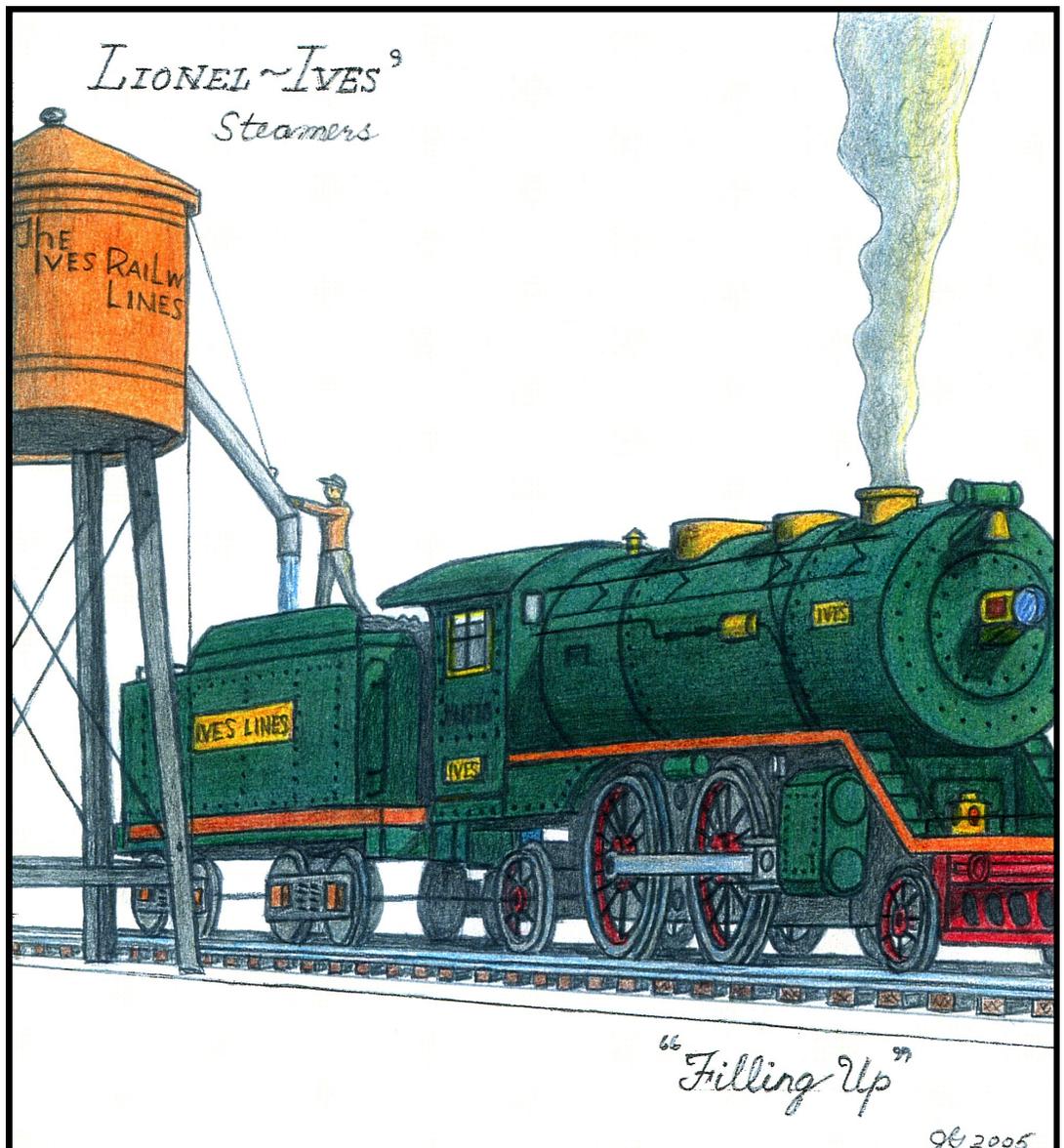
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FILLING UP

(See front cover illustration)

By John Gray I-6662

This issue's cover illustration depicts a railroad worker filling the water tank of an IVES Wide Gauge No. 1760T coal tender, linked up to an IVES No. 1770 locomotive, waiting at the freight yard to be coupled to a consist of freight cars. The water source is an IVES No. 89(A) water tower.

Although sporting IVES brass plates, and appearing green in color, the steamer is really a Lionel 2-4-2 No. 390 black Standard Gauge locomotive, with brass trim and a Lionel No. 390T tender.

After IVES came under the ownership of Lionel, the Bridgeport Connecticut factory was closed in 1931. All 1931 IVES production was produced in Lionel's manufacturing facility in Irvington, New Jersey.

Although high in quality, these were not true IVES products, with the exception of the newly introduced IVES 1764 Locomotive. During the final days of IVES we basically have a product line consisting of Lionel pieces with IVES plates, therefore making these trains almost unrecognizable as true IVES products.

Gradually IVES was completely absorbed by Lionel, thus the IVES marque, and its products, disappeared from the toy train scene forever. By the mid 1930's, IVES was merely a memory. However, these Lionel products labeled for IVES with either decals or brass plates have retained their charm and value and still quite collectible.

And yet, as any IVES aficionado will tell you, there is nothing quite like an original IVES toy train.

PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

Don Lewis

Dear Society Member:

Alas, another summer has come and gone. Not sure, but as we get younger (!!) the time seems to go by quicker. Or maybe it's just me. I trust the summer went well for you and your family.

As in the past, the summer has produced some great IVES finds. An early 120 platform complete with fence appeared on eBay recently and a very late and unusual 120 platform with the herringbone pattern roof showed up at a Connecticut auction. Talk about tough items.

Also, I received an email recently with the picture of a Thordarson transformer with an IVES oval plate on it (see insert). The plate was similar in design to the IVES point of sale litho sign that is shown on the Society website. However, the plate on the transformer says IVES Mfg. Co. whereas the print on the sign says IVES Toys Make Happy Boys.

The good news is there are still plenty of unique IVES oddities out there and we continue to learn something new about IVES every time they show up. We will continue to show these unique items in future issues of tracks.

The Society still maintains a solid membership of 250 and is financially sound. This can be credited to the dedicated effort of our contributors to the TIES and Tracks publications and to those who send photos for the website. Let us not forget the continued efforts of our editors and webmaster, because without their talents we would just have a disorganized pile of information.

That being said, the Society's publications are only as good as the articles/photos received. I continue to stress that we will always need articles, etc. Anything we receive will be published so your efforts will be recognized. Please support us by writing an article or sending a photo of your favorite or rare IVES piece.

We will again have our general membership meeting on Friday October 17, 2014 in the meeting room in the Orange Hall. The meeting will start at 12:00 PM. The show and tell format will once again be used, so feel free to bring your favorite IVES piece to share with the rest of the group. We look forward to seeing you there.

As you read this issue of Tracks, York will be less than 2 months away. As I previously have stated, as toy train collectors, we seem to live our lives from York to York. How true is that!!

York Bound,

MY PROSPERITY SPECIAL

By: Randy Berger

At a local Pittsburgh train meet held in Monroeville sometime in the 80's Ed McFalls showed up with an IVES Prosperity Special set. The problem was the loco had the cab broken off the boiler completely. The tender and the cars were not bad, but where in the world would you ever find a boiler?

A friend of mine, Jack Nolden, purchased the set and many people laughed at Jack's Folly. Fast forward several years and an ad appeared in the TCA newsletter "For Sale/Wanted" section advertising a Prosperity Special boiler.

Jack called and verified that this was indeed a genuine Prosperity Special boiler. Jack asked if the owner could meet him at LaGuardia airport and so a meeting was arranged and Jack flew to New York and met the seller at the airport. I can't imagine Jack's excitement even though he described it many times. He paid the asking price and caught the return flight to Pittsburgh. Jack said he cradled that boiler in his lap all the way back to Pittsburgh.

Nobody laughed at Jack anymore.

Several years later another collector and I were visiting Jack and he explained his health was failing and he wanted me to buy the Prosperity. Although his asking price was reasonable, it was more than I had. Later that week I was explaining my dilemma to another collector friend, Mel Nelms. Mel said "Why don't you sell all that "S" gauge you have and buy the Prosperity - you can always buy the "S" gauge again if you want it."

It was a brilliant suggestion and I acted on it immediately. I called Jack and asked if he could hold it for a reasonable length of time while I raised the money. Jack said he really wanted me to have the train and agreed.

I sold off many fine AF "S" gauge items including a boxed circus set. I raised about half the required amount and my friend and I again visited Jack and I gave him half the asking price and agreed I would pay the rest before Christmas.

Jack told me to take the set with me even though I still owed him a considerable amount. I protested weakly, but he said to sign a note that I owed him the money and that he wanted me to have the train. We left that evening with the Prosperity all boxed up including the original broken boiler.

Jack's health was worse than I knew, but he was aware he didn't have long. He died before Christmas and when I attended his funeral I discretely told his wife that I owed Jack a good deal of money and I would have it for her shortly. She said she knew of our arrangement and several weeks later I visited her and paid the remainder. She told me that Jack was happy I had purchased the train.

Today I still have that Prosperity Special set. It is the prize of my IVES collection. There is nothing better than having one of the ultimate collector pieces of an IVES collection - except friendship.



Editor's note:

Randy, This feat was the same as pulling the inside card to a straight flush. The odds are the same Fantastic piece!

THE COKE CAR

Editor's note:

On occasion a group of us get involved in an email discussion on a topic that is relevant to our passion for IVES trains. This discussion started with an email from Eric Strackeljahn on "Coke Cars".

Since there hasn't been much group discussion lately and train season is just around the corner, I couldn't resist hearing your thoughts and opinions. The other day I was working on repairing a 191 and couldn't help but wonder how "coke" would've been hauled in this car. Surely loose chunks of coke would just fall out the sides between the slats of the car. All the pictures I could find of the stuff being hauled by rail was in a hopper car, and for that matter, the hopper car is lettered for the same coke and Coal Company. Aside from a tipper, there isn't an easy way to unload the coke car either. Perhaps you would put bagged coke fuel on this car? Did IVES model the car after something real or was it just an excuse to make another car in their line-up?

Any thoughts or pictures?

Eric Strackeljahn

I worked for the Union RR. They hauled coke from Clairton Works to the other mills. I never saw a coke car as IVES pictured it. They were all high-sided hoppers as coke is light.

Randy Berger

I can't imagine the use of a car like the 191, and have seen only hopper/gondolas for coke delivery, some with steel containers set into it. I have seen some coal delivery "wagons" that were made out of wood with iron straps in the UK. Maybe the 191 was homage to that sort of car? The straps of course would be closer together, but Ives was just making a representation...right? Also remember there are many grades of Coke and some are big cakes/slabs/chunks rather than just chunks of coal size pieces. It could also depend on how the coal/petroleum residuals were coked as well. Most coal cokes went to fire general furnaces or steam generation devices (like a loco) while petroleum cokes went for specialty firings, just some thoughts.

Rob English

As far as I can tell, during the late 19th and early 20th century in the US coke was transported largely in open top high-side hopper cars. The IVES 194 hopper car may have been close, if short approximation, but the 191 coke car certainly wasn't. BUT....what if the 191 is actually what many of us have long suspected: a design stolen entirely and exactly from MARKLIN production at the turn of the century?! In that case, the question may be "How was coke hauled by rail in EUROPE in the early 20th century?" As others have noted, there are differing forms of industrial coke - perhaps the preferred European form during that time wasn't small light chunks as it was in the US. (Yes - this is another opportunity for me to raise my perennial theories about IVES and MARKLIN: - who copied whom? - did IVES initially purchase cars from MARKLIN for its 1 Gauge line? - What about the nearly identical locos? - Inquiring minds want to know...

John DeSantis

Hi Eric, I don't think IVES did their homework on this one. They simply copied the Marklin 1 gauge version of this car as they did with various other freight cars. If you check some European books you can find photos of those early Marklin items. Don't know if the German's called it a COKE car.

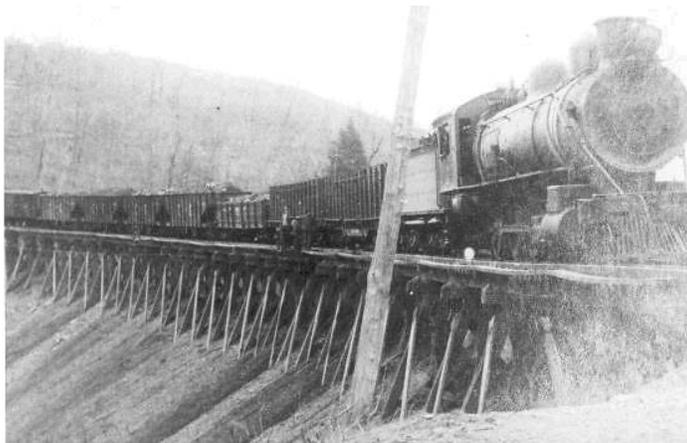
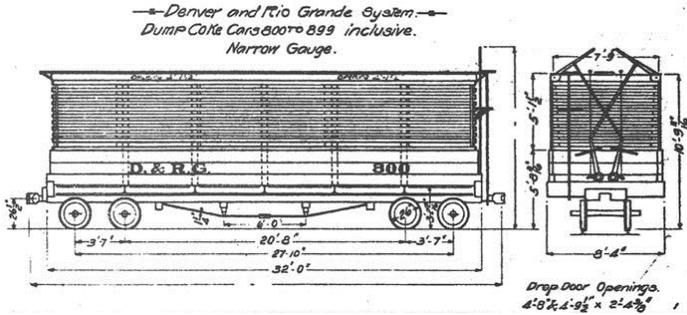
Mike Vargas

Coke was also hauled in converted Gondolas, with added upper slats, or older stock cars with the roofs removed. It was a way to re-use old rolling stock.....These were old time cars, not contemporary to the period when the IVES products were marketed, but they sure look more real than anything Lionel made! See pictures below.





Dave has found proof positive that there really were US railroad coke cars with slatted sides (even though only the upper portion of the car). The photo of the gondola base (see picture page 4) with upper half in slats is all we need to see: it's filled to the brim with chunks of coke that are (somehow) managing to stay inside the slats.



Of course the IVES version doesn't have nearly as many slats spaced so tightly, and if scaled up to full size couldn't hold anything smaller than a breadbox. But that's just "Toyification" (Did I make that up? Sounds like a Clem word), and in the world of tinplate it's more the rule than the exception. As an aside... over the last few years I've photographed freight and passenger cars, as well as locos, in a number of RR Museums around the country - whenever it struck me that the 12" to 12" scale version and its tinplate toy counterpart were amazingly close in appearance. Most of these right-on-the-money sightings have been IVES. The 1 Gauge and 2 1/4 gauge tank cars are almost scale models of a real one circa 1910 that I photographed last year. And just this Summer there was a real S-2 that blew my mind - the 3241/2/3's nailed it! In the same collection was one of the last surviving Olympian locos - and again the 3245 was impressively correct. Even the 3235 has a real world cousin that's practically a twin. In fairness, the twelve wheel AF President Special locos are also damn close to the originals! Lionel --- not so much. Just occurred to me that maybe I should work up an article for one of the ITS publications showing some of these with side by side photos. Can anyone recall that being done anywhere recently?

John DeSantis



IVES #191 COKE CAR 1921-1928



**MARKLIN #2932 PLATTANWAGEN
1906-1925
defined: multipurpose transporting car**

Perhaps I should've asked myself "What would Randy do?" I couldn't help but laugh as I flipped through the 1925 catalog tonight and noticed that under the "191 coke car", Ives put a sentence in the description stating that even though it's labeled a coke car, the car can be used for hauling a variety of loads....anything that will fit without spilling out.

Remember guys: "It's all in the catalog"

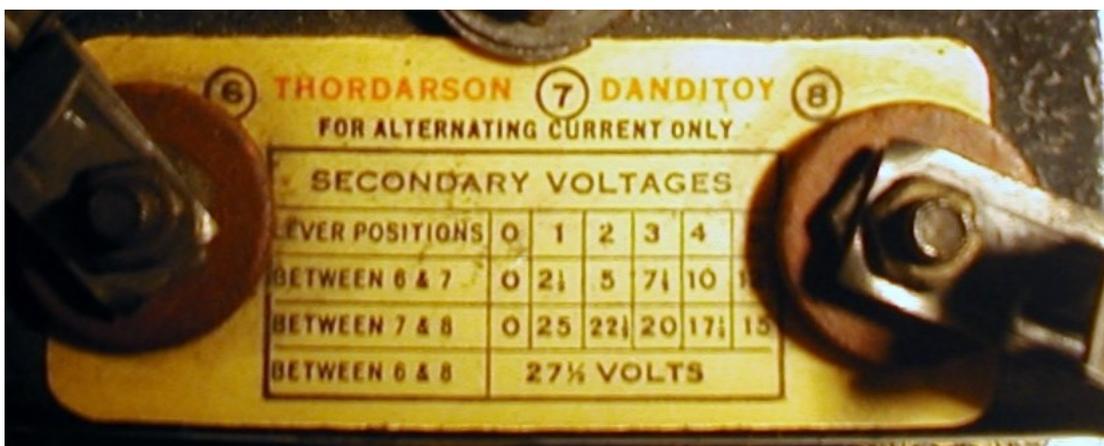
Eric Strackeljahn

**RARE THORDARSON
TRANSFORMER FROM
THE COLLECTION OF
I.T.S. MEMBER
BECKY YATES
BROOKVILLE, PA**



RARE IVES OVAL PLATE

The plate was similar in design to the IVES point of sale litho sign that is shown on the Society website. However, the plate on the transformer states **IVES Mfg. Co.** whereas the print on the sign says **IVES Toys Make Happy Boys.**



THE RED 3255

By: Bill Clay

A few years ago while searching for some old Christmas decorations that belonged to my parents I came across an old box. Inside was this “0” gauge IVES 3255R with passenger cars.

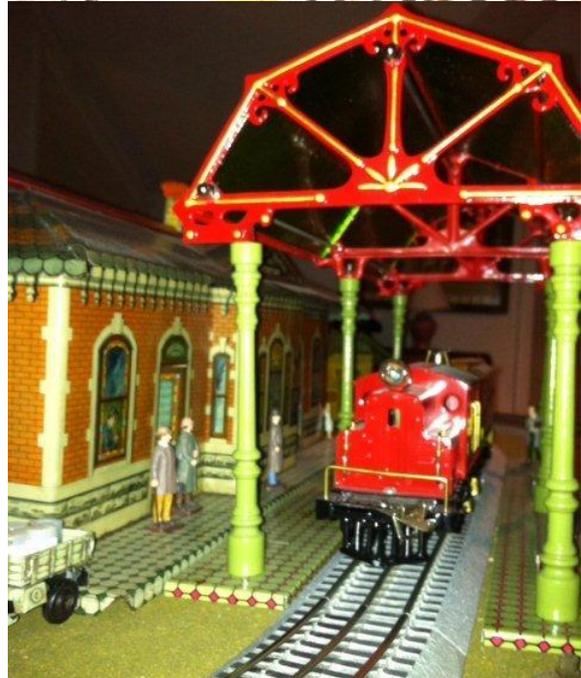
It must have been my late father’s train set when he was a boy. The engine was in a terrible state. Hardly any of the drab green paint was left and it was a bit rusty from being in the attic so long. Fortunately his cars were in much better condition.

I cleaned and lubricated the engine, put the locomotive on the track, and to my surprise, it ran! I contacted Joe Mania about restoring it, sent it off and Joe did a fantastic job restoring the engine and body. He asks our forgiveness for the red repaint but there wasn't much of the original paint left. Yes, this is the IVES set that started it all for me! I've been around since 1941 and never knew the set existed!

Just a side note about the Ives 116 station, my wife, Maryann, and I were invited to visit my daughters in-laws who live in Jim Thorpe Pa. Fortunate for me, there was a town wide sidewalk sale going on the weekend we were there.

Sitting on one of the tables was this Ives 116 station. It was in very nice condition but was missing the roof peak and chimney. I asked the very elderly lady who was selling it, if she had the missing piece. She said she'd check. She returned with the missing chimney but, no roof peak. With some searching, I found Mr. LaDuke of NY and he made a roof peak for me and it looks great!

Note: Bill sent this information in response to our call for articles. This is a great story from a member who was able to bring two IVES pieces back to life. Bill enjoyed doing it and we appreciate his effort.



**KLING KLANG WENT THE BELL
BY: CLEM CLEMENT**

At the 2013 Spring IVES Society gathering at York, I brought a closed box of electric and mechanical trackside warning bells and Klinger Klangers (German). The box was hidden under a display table.

When it was my turn to do “Show and Tell”, a titter ran through the audience as I always have something different or weird to talk about. I volunteered member John DeSantis to be my Second for this demonstration. I set the closed box in front of the group and John held a beach towel so the group could not see what was in the box. (I’m not sure what John thought was gonna happen as I did not tell him ahead of time. For sure it was not showing my IVES shorts). I had transformer power nearby and powered up the track warning bells/signals one at a time. The group could not see them but could hear them. The challenge was to identify which of the sound makers were IVES bells or at least identify who made the ringing signal. The piece was hidden behind the towel. Such fun! We rang IVES, Flyer, LIONEL and Marklin Bells. Also some hand cranked Klinger Klangers from Germany.

No one recognized the two IVES units!!

In sum, the American Flyer Danger Signal #4116 was the sweetest sound (or maybe the least annoying sound).

Most were harsh and unpleasant to our old ears.

Several members said they would go home and hookup their noise makers. Others had never thought to compare sounds from their various bells.

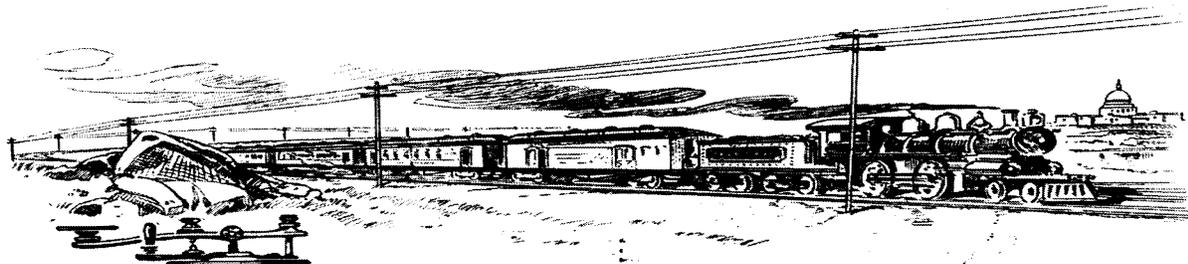
As a boy I would dream all summer long about setting up my trains and then first thing firing up my Lionel # 69 Electric Warning Signal. When the time came the nasty thing would make such a terrible racket that after a couple of activations, it remained disconnected for the rest of the train season.

Good fun. Thanks John for “holding the Towel”



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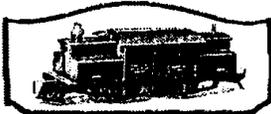


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