

# Burlington Route Historical Society

## WAYCAR DATA SHEET

Prepared Specifically for the 125th Anniversary Celebration at Creston, Iowa, July 1-4, 1994



For more information on the BRHS or for a membership application, write: Burlington Route Historical Society, P.O. Box 456, La Grange, Illinois 60525

### Burlington Route NE-10 Waycar #13513

Early in 1929, at the end of the "Roaring Twenties," the Burlington Railroad's financial health was well and prospects for increased business were good. The Burlington was celebrating its 80th anniversary in glorious fashion with the introduction of a fleet of new passenger trains, including the Aristocrat, Ak-Sar-Ben and Blackhawk, complete with a dozen magnificent S4 Class, 4-6-4 Hudson engines. It also received delivery of 1,755 new freight cars, more than any year since 1927. Then came the infamous stock market crash of October 1929, and traffic on the Burlington began to decline. It wasn't until March of 1930, however, that the railroad management had serious concern over the actions on Wall Street. It was during this time the Burlington decided to build a new set of steel waycars to assist in replacing older, wooden waycars in mainline service between Chicago and Denver.

Between February and April, 1930, 25 steel-bodied waycars were constructed at the Aurora Shops in Aurora, Illinois and were classed NE-10. Along with the NE-10 classification, the Burlington also assigned a new number series, between 13500 and 13524, to separate these from the wooden waycars in the 14000 series. The Burlington constructed all of their waycars after the late 1880's, and each one, including the new NE-10's, bore a strong "family resemblance." The NE-10 waycars were the last waycars built at Aurora, but not the last built by the Burlington. The waycars were originally painted in the standard mineral red paint scheme, with white numbers and a simple Burlington Route herald below the cupola on each side.

Waycars, as well as other railroad equipment, received modifications throughout their railroad careers. In 1945, NE10's 13516 through 13524 were equipped with electric lights and train radio powered by axle generators with batteries placed in a large box under the body. The radio required the distinctive "wagon wheel" antenna to be mounted on the

roof. Later, toilets were moved forward and the first window ahead of the cupola was blanked out. Some waycars of this class were painted in a short-lived experimental paint scheme that was orange with black lettering. This paint scheme only was applied for a short period in 1954, therefore only a few NE10's became orange. However, after the delivery of the NE12 waycars in silver, a majority of the NE10's received a simplified version of the silver scheme with black letters.

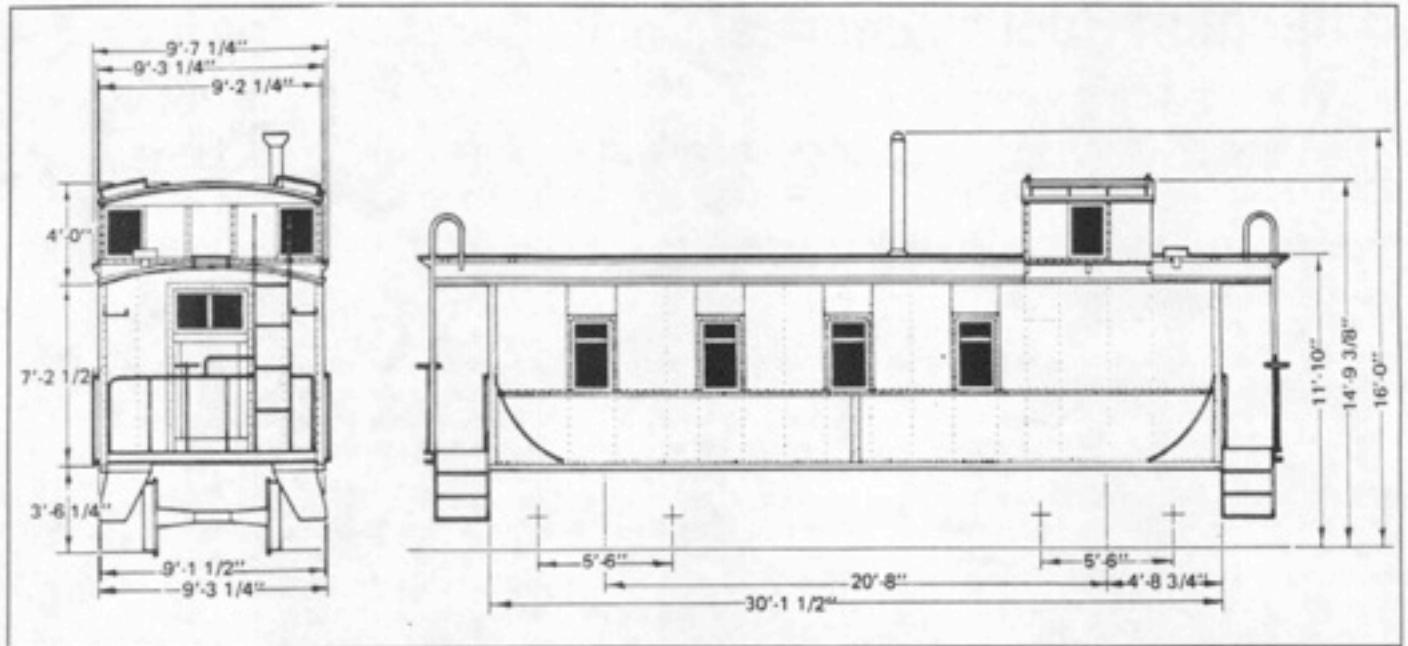
All the NE10's survived to be a part of the Burlington Northern merger of March 2, 1970, and continued to give adequate service over the entire BN system. After the merger, all the Burlington waycars became known as cabooses (except to the men from the Q), were repainted in the standard Cascade Green paint scheme with white letters complete with a large BN logo. They were assigned the numbers 11445 through 11469. The BN soon retired all the wooden cabooses and even the steel NE10's by the mid 1970's.

### Why are they called Waycars?

The majority of the railroads in the United States call the car at the end of their trains a caboose. Other common names used are hacks, crummies, vans, cabin cars, or shacks. But why did the Burlington call theirs a waycar? It is believed that the term originated around the turn of the century, coming from older passenger cars which had been converted for use as "Way Freight Rider Cars" or "Way Freight Caboose." Because of its length, the term was shortened to a single word, "waycar." This term caught on with the employees of the Burlington, and from that time forward, the Burlington cabooses have been proudly known as waycars.



Bringing up the markers on a Burlington train in a siding at Lewiston, Illinois, waycar 13513 is already 19 years old. Bernard Corbin captured this waycar on a hot July day in 1949, still in its mineral red paint with white letters and herald. Bernard Corbin/Wagner Collection



## What is the purpose of a Waycar?

Almost everyone over the age of 25, who is familiar with railroads, has come to expect a waycar to punctuate the end of a train. Most of us who have watched the passing of a train have waved at the crew in the mighty locomotives, and have taken the opportunity to also wave at the crew in the waycar. But do we really know why it is there?

The waycar was originally intended to provide a place for the additional crew members needed to operate a train. Before the advent of air brakes, one or more brakemen were required to go "over the top" to manually set the brakes on each and every freight car in the train. The conductor used the waycar as a mobile office to complete his waybills, and paperwork. He also used the waycar for lodging on layovers away from home. At one time, waycars were specifically assigned to individual conductors and they were allowed to personalize them. Some waycars were even retired when the conductor retired.

Waycars were also used for passengers on local mixed freights and as drover cars. Drover cars contained extra bunks for livestock men, or drovers, that rode with their livestock on the way to market. If the livestock was shipped over a long distance, government rules required the stock to be unloaded, fed and watered every 28 hours, and the drovers assisted in this duty.

The crew in the waycar also played a key role in the safe operation of the train. From their vantage point in the cupola, they could spot the tell-tale smoke from a hot-box, a wheel bearing that had run low on grease and had caught on fire. As trains rounded curves they could inspect

for dragging equipment, or for boxcar doors that might have jimmied open. As they passed over countless miles of track they could inspect the rails, and report of rough or defective spots. They could watch for hobos and other non-ticketed passengers that would try to board the train when it stopped for fuel or water.

The waycar has always "brought up the markers" of a freight train, the kerosene or electric marker lights that hung on either side of the back end of the waycar. If the train was required to stop, one of the men would act as a flagman, and proceed back from the train with a flag or flares to warn other oncoming trains. When the train was required to make a backward movement over grade crossings, a small air-operated whistle mounted to the rear platform was used to issue shrill warnings to those in the way.

Each railroad used the waycars to their advantage, not only for business and safety, but also for public relations. They knew that the public's attention was drawn to the waycar and the often used bright paint schemes and placed large company logos or heralds on the waycars as an extra touch.

Unfortunately, with the arrival of the electronic age, satellites and rear-end telemetry, the need for the familiar waycar at the end of a train will soon become obsolete. Flashing rear end devices, or FREDs, have already made their impact, with most trains being run with a twenty-pound box hanging on the rear coupler, having no personality and offering no wave, just flashing its red light as it passes.

### CB&Q CLASS NE10 WAYCAR #13513 (BURLINGTON NORTHERN CABOOSE #11458)

BUILT:	March 1930	BUILDER:	CB&Q, Aurora, Illinois Shops
WEIGHT:	53,800 Lbs. / 43,600 less radio equip. 29,040 Lbs. - Body 14,560 Lbs. - Both Trucks	TRUCKS:	Bettendorf
LENGTH:	29 Feet - 6 Inches - Inside 35 Feet - 11 Inches - Over Platforms	WHEELS:	Rolled Steel
WIDTH: 8 Feet - 6 Inches - Inside 9 Feet - 8 Inches - Over Handrails		WHEEL DIAMETER:	33 Inches
HEIGHT:	7 Feet - 2 5/16 Inches - Inside 16 Feet - Top of Smokestack	COUPLER TYPE:	E
		COUPLER YOKES:	AAR
		AIR BRAKES:	AB 10x12