

ANN ARBOR

**Single Sheath Boxcars
1919 - 1962**

**RPM Chicagoland
October 2024**

Craig Wilson

Beginning in 1919 the Ann Arbor Railroad began to purchase three groups of 40-foot single-sheath boxcars to replace its aging fleet of double-sheath cars.

Haskell & Barker built 150 USRA-design 9'0" IH boxcars in 1919 with 50 more built in 1920.

Standard Tank Car Company built 250 9'0" IH cars in 1924 with Hutchins ends and Hutchins Dry-lading roof.

Standard Tank Car Company also built 250 10'0" IH "Automobile" cars with 4' + 6' doors. These taller cars featured a Hutchins roof and Hutchins ends with an extra plate at the top.

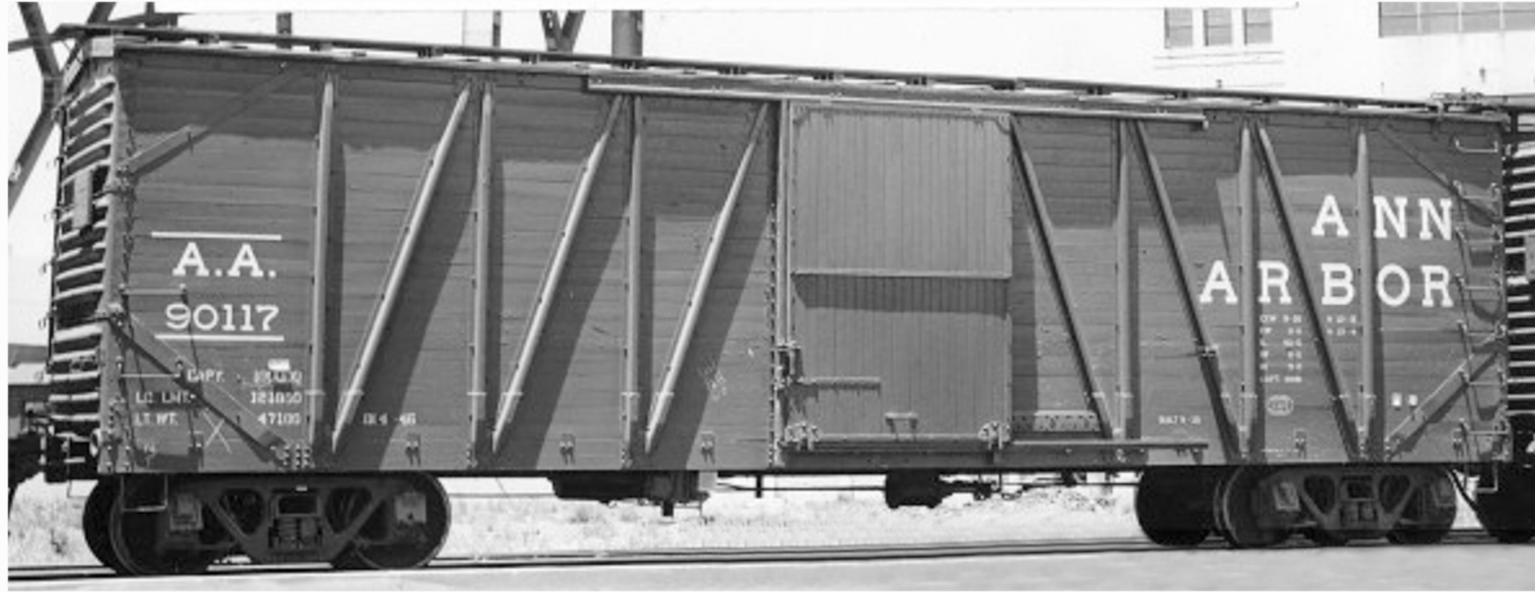
These 700 cars were the backbone of the AA boxcar fleet until the railroad begin to purchase all-steel boxcars in the late 1940's.

SERIES 12000-12199 / 90000-90199



Al Armitage photo / Ron Morse collection

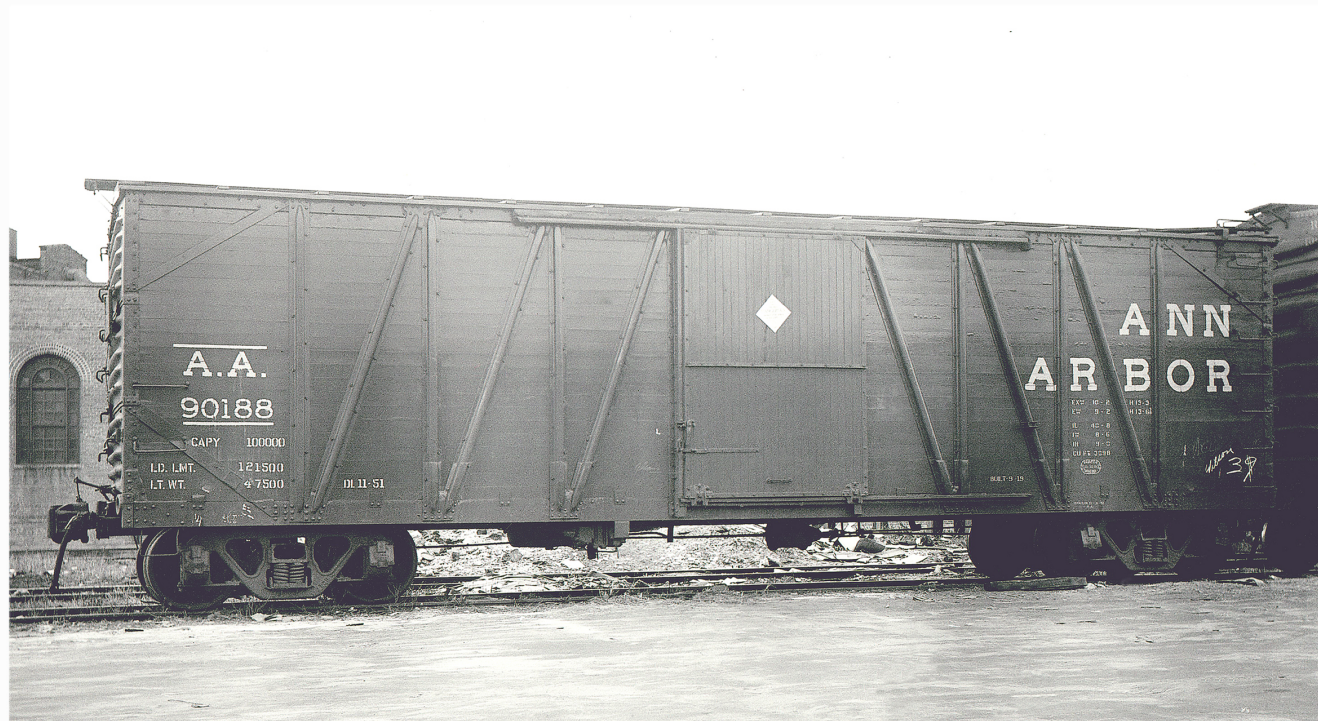
**Built Haskell & Barker / 150 cars in 1919 / 50 cars in 1920
9'0" IH / 50 ton capacity
Built with vertical brake staff and K-brakes
Upgraded to A-B brakes and Miner power
brake gear in the 1940's**



Ken Harstine collection

Beginning in 1929 the 12000 - 12199 series boxcars were renumbered into series 90000 - 90199. The renumbering was completed by 1935.

Most of these cars received “grain clips” along the lower sides. Also the A-B brake equipment can be seen in this 1946 photo.



Col. Chet McCoid photo / Bob's Photos

The “Dangerous” placard on the door of AA 90188 probably indicates that is carrying a load of batteries from the Globe Union plant in Owosso.

By 1960 the number of 90000 - 90199 cars began to dwindle rapidly and all were off the roster by 1962.



Ann Arbor FA-2 set 51 was the primary subject of this Sept. 1959 Jim Parker photo at Owosso, Michigan. But it provides a nice view of the ends of boxcars AA 90003 and AA 1115 (an ex-Wabash car). Note that the end reporting marks are “ANN ARBOR” instead of “A.A.” following standard Wabash practice.

SERIES 11400-11649 / 73750-73998



Arnold Menke collection

Built Standard Tank Car Company / 250 cars in 1924

9'0" IH / 40 ton capacity

Hutchins ends / Hutchins Dry-lading roof

Vertical brake staff and K-brakes as built and

upgraded to A-B brakes and Miner power

brake gear in the 1940's



M. D. McCarter collection

Beginning in 1929 these 11400 - 11649 series cars were renumbered into AA series 73750 - 73998

The renumbering was completed in 1937

By the mid-1940's they had been upgraded to

A-B brakes and Miner power handbrakes

From 1950 to 1961 as many as 33 cars were

equipped with racks for battery loading

1962 was the last listing for this cars in

the equipment registers



Jim Parker photo

Jim Parker found AA 73788 and a companion in MofW service at Howell Michigan in September 1959. Painted in parent Wabash RR MofW yellow, the lettering is the same as used on the car when it was in revenue service. Note “MofW PAINTER CAR” stencilled on the door.

SERIES 10300-10549 / 41000-41249 / 74000-74150



Jay Williams / Big Four Graphics

**Built Standard Tank Car Company / 250 cars in 1924
10'0" IH / 40 ton capacity / 10' door opening (4' + 6' doors)
Hutchins ends (with plated added) / Hutchins Dry-lading roof
Vertical brake staff and K-brakes as built and
upgraded to A-B brakes and Miner power
brake gear in the 1940's**



**Like the other AA cars, these boxcars were upgraded with A-B brakes and Miner power handbrakes in the 1940's
They were renumbered to 41000-41249 beginning in 1929 with the renumbering completed by 1939
They bore "AUTOMOBILE" lettering although the cars were never equipped with rack for automobile loading.
This lettering was eliminated on most cars repainted in the 1950's**



Jim Parker photo / Howell Michigan / Sept 1959

From 1937 to 1939 two-thirds of these cars were rebuilt as single-door boxcars and numbered in the 74000-74150 series 100 cars with the original door configuration remained as 41000-series boxcars through the end of their service lives in 1962.

AA 74014 has the diamond placard on the door indicating that it was probably assigned to battery loading.



Rob Adams collection

February 1955 found AA 74074 on the Bangor and Aroostook in Millinocket, Maine with a load of pulpwood.



Jim Shaw photo / Owosso / 1955

The height difference between the 9'0" 73750-series and the 10'0" 74000-series boxcars is very apparent in this 1955 photo taken at the yard in Owosso



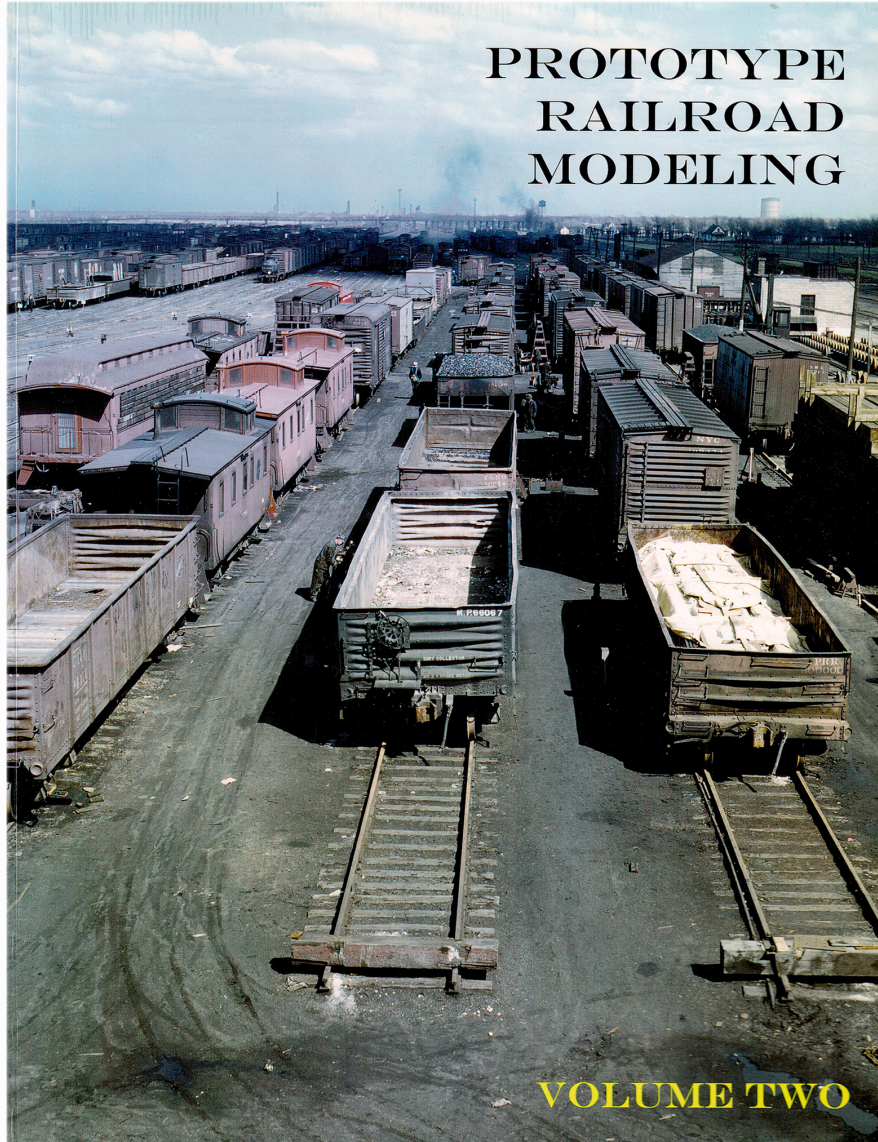
Ted Ellis photo / Menominee Michigan / July 1967

A few of the 41000-series boxcars became Company Service/MofW cars after 1962. In the post-Wabash era MofW equipment was painted black.



AA X4637 / Boat Landing (Elberta) / August 1976

The MofW boxcars served to the very end of Ann Arbor RR operations in 1982. One is preserved today at a museum in Saginaw, Michigan



Rob Adams' excellent article in *Prototype Railroad Modeling, Vol. 2* [Speedwitch Media] is the source of much of the prototype information contained in this presentation.

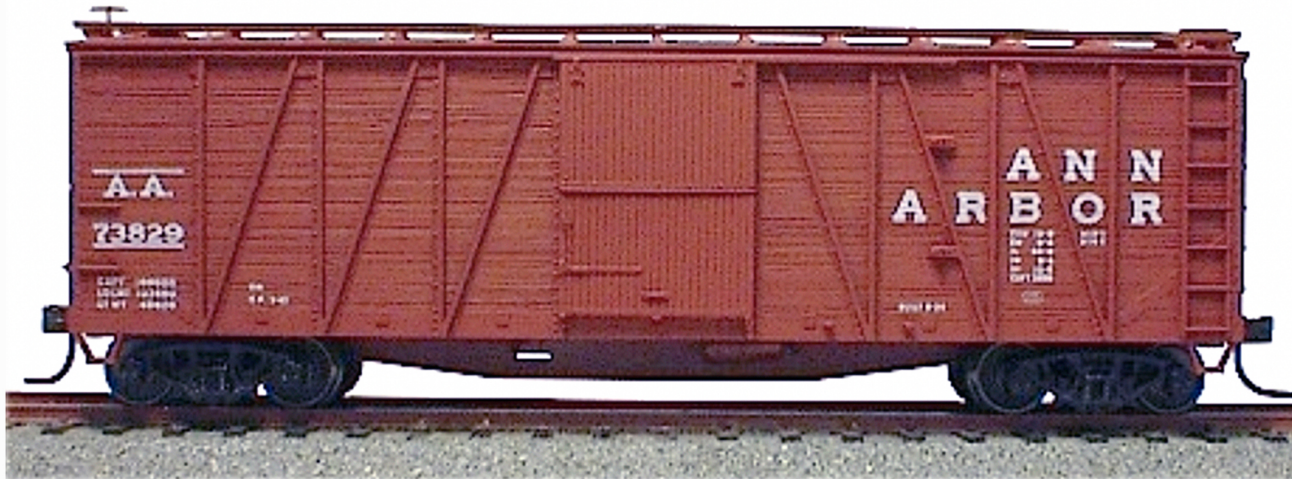
MODELING THE ANN ARBOR RAILROAD SINGLE-SHEATH BOXCARS



NO LONGER AN IMPOSSIBLE TASK

Series 11400-11649 / 73750-73998

More than 20 years ago Arnt Gerritsen began to modify an Accurail single-sheath boxcar kit.



Accurail kit #4316

The fishbelly underframe is easily modified. The USRA-style ends need to be replaced with Hutchins ends. Westerfield made a casting but it was for a smaller car and would not fit the Accurail body.

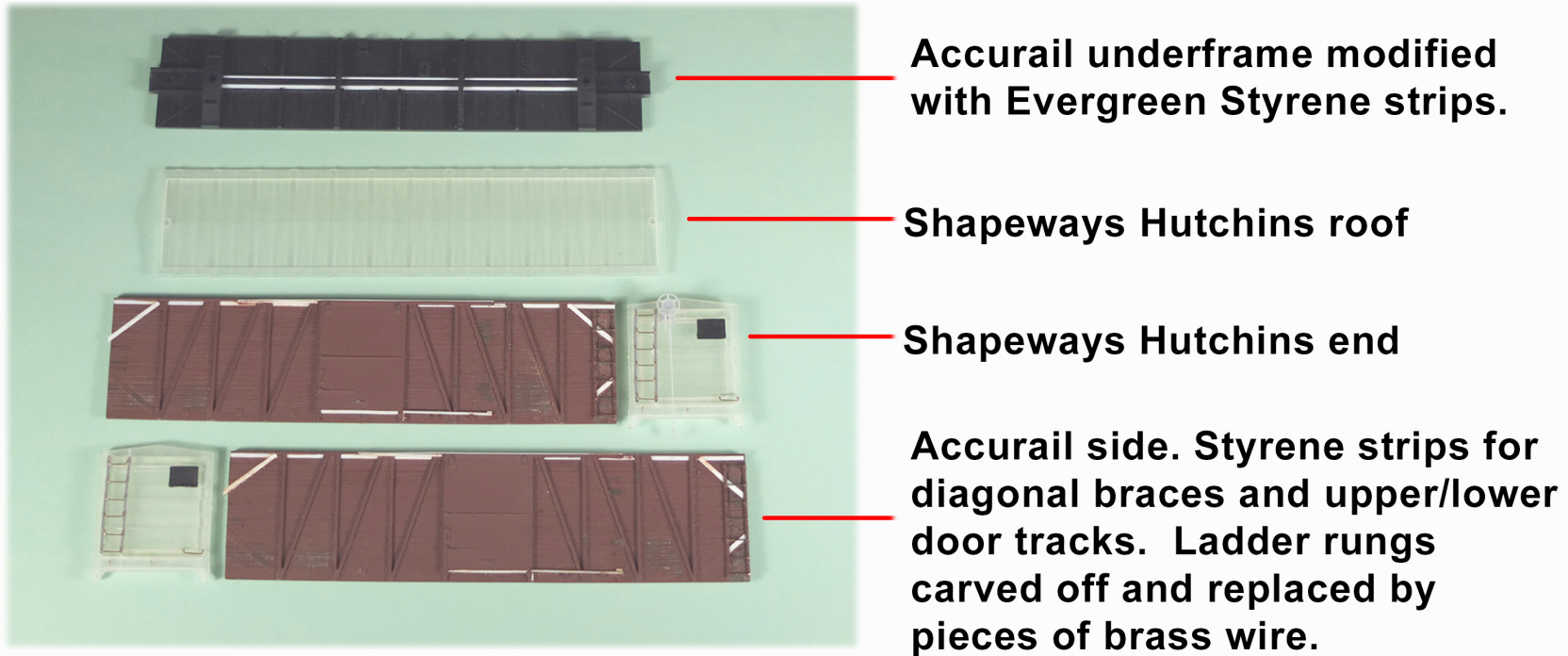
Years later Canadian modeler Rob Kirkham posted these pictures of his attempt to use the Accurail body for these cars.



Rob had designed Hutchins ends and was having the parts 3D printed by Shapeways.

The main problem in modeling these cars had been solved.

I bought parts from Shapeways for the Hutchins ends. By the time I was able to start my model of the car, Rob had also designed a 3D printed Hutchins roof for these cars. The sides were cut from the Accurail body to create a “flat kit” that was easier to work with.



It's starting to look like a boxcar ...



**End ladder fabricated from Tichy ladder stiles and Tichy drop grabs.
Tichy side grab irons: upper is 18" straight / lower is 18" drop.
Miner brake gear: Tangent Scale Models.
End tack board: Tangent Scale models.
Sill steps: A-Line
The running board shown was replaced with one from Yarmouth.**

**Paint: Scalecoat II
Oxide Red**

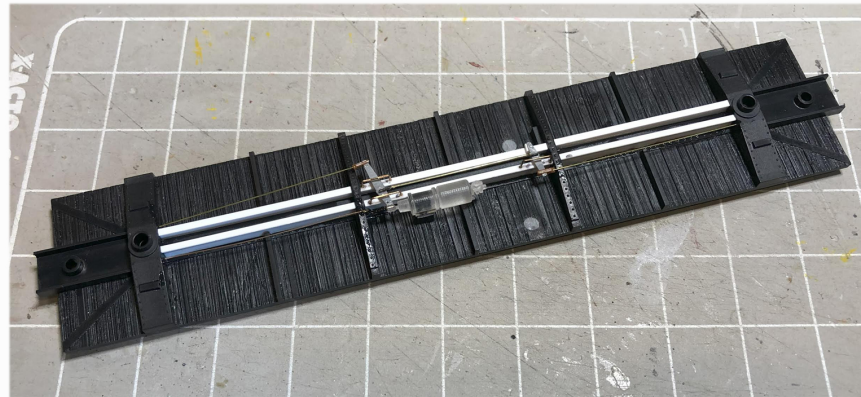
**Decals: Smokebox
Graphics Ann Arbor RR
boxcars**



Rene Lavoise took a similar approach using the Accurail body and the Shapeways 3D printed ends.



Rene chose to model the cars “as built” in 1924 with K-brakes and a vertical brake staff.



The 11400-11649 number series dates from when the cars were built in 1924.



The paint scheme pre-dates the Wabash-style lettering that was used when the cars were renumbered into the 73750-73998 series in the 1930's.

Series 12000-12199 / 90000-90199

There are two models of these cars which are quite accurate.

Tichy Train Group makes kit #4026 USRA Boxcar



At one time Yesteryear Models offered assembled models of the Tichy car in two Ann Arbor numbers. The color was not a good match for the oxide red color of the prototype cars and the placement of the 14-inch “ANN ARBOR” was different from the prototype.

**Rapido Trains produced this model of the USRA
boxcar in six Ann Arbor numbers.**



**The oxide red color is more authentic (especially when weathered)
and the lettering on the car sides is correct. But the model has A-B
brakes and a vertical brake staff. The prototype cars were equipped
with Miner power handbrakes when they were converted from
K-brakes in the 1940's.**



The brake step was reused, moved lower on the end.

Tangent Scale Models Miner brake gear added.

Coupler lift bar fabricated from brass wire with Tangent eyebolts.

The vertical brake staff and brake step were removed and the holes filled with styrene rod.

The carmer cut lever was removed (and saved for another project).



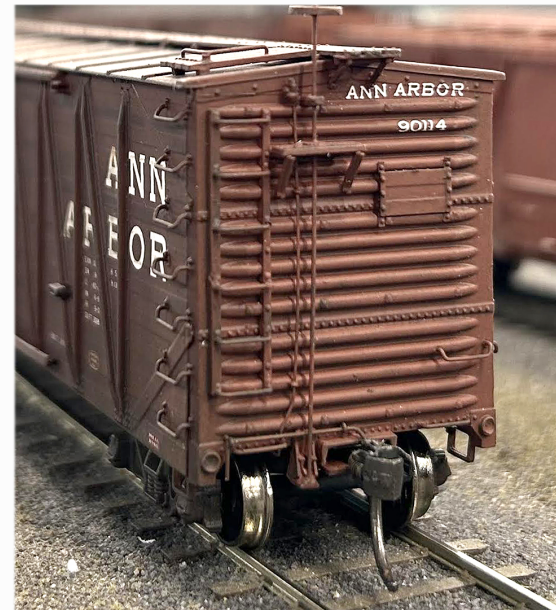


The incorrect “A.A.” reporting marks on the ends were removed. Scalecoat II Oxide Red was a good match for touching up the paint and correct “ANN ARBOR” end lettering and numbers were added using decals from the Smokebox Graphics AA boxcar set.

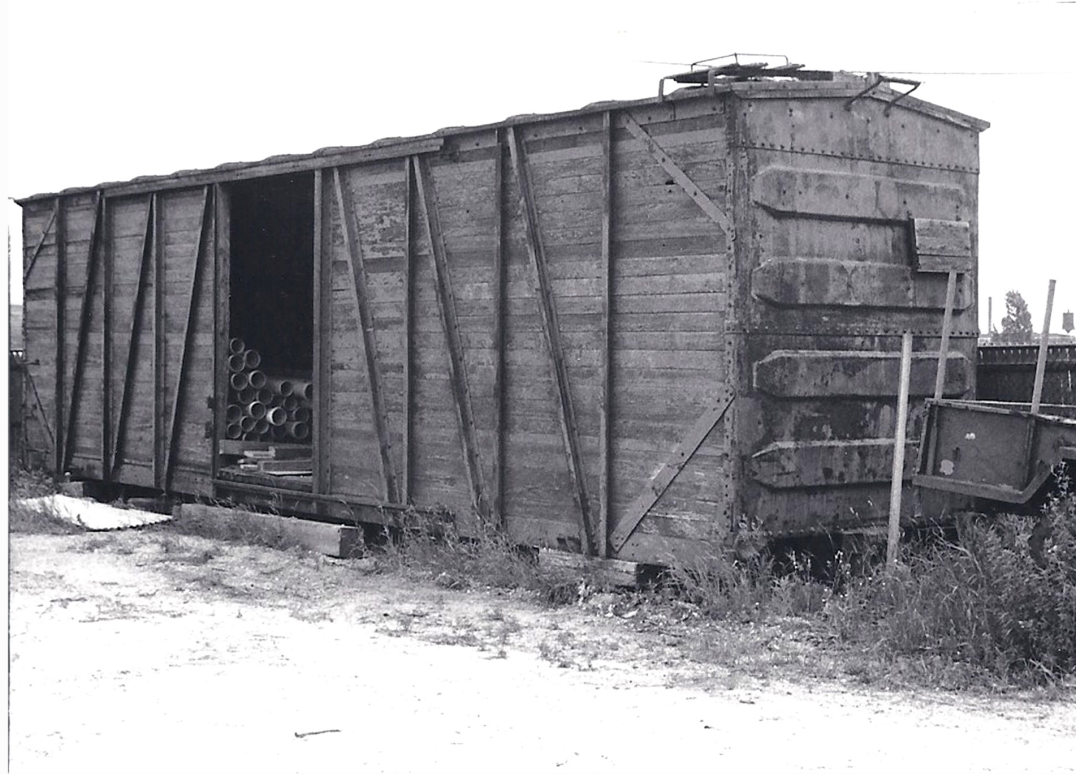
Another approach: the TICHY boxcar kit



Chris Vanko used the Tichy USRA boxcar kit for this model of AA 90114. He chose to use the vertical brake staff which puts the car into a 1930-1940's time frame. Smokebox Graphics decals were used for the lettering.

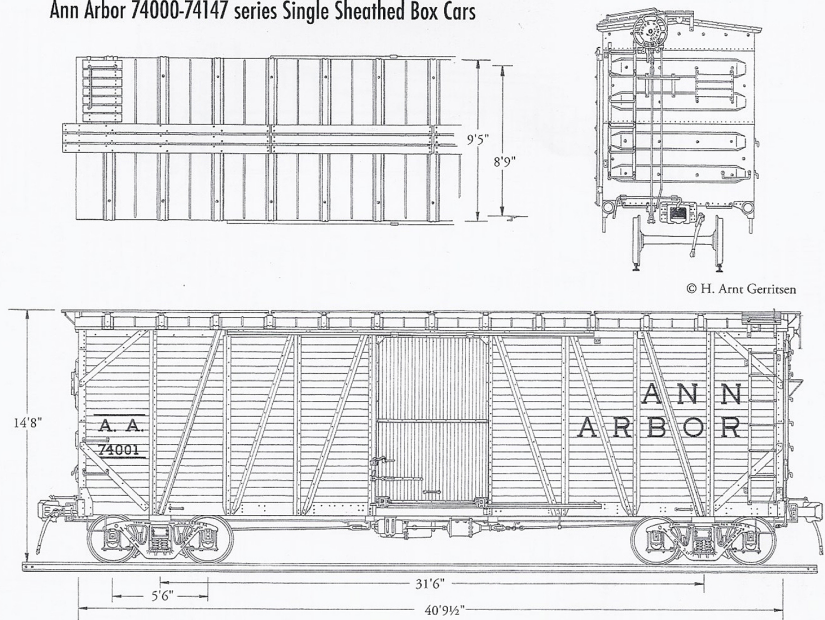


Series 10300-10549 / 41000-41249 / 74000-74150



This 74000-series survivor was found in the Dept. of Public Works yard in Cadillac, Michigan. Arnt Gerritsen and I obtained permission to go photograph and measure the car. Using our field notes and photos, Arnt made scale drawings of both the 41000-“door-and-a-half” and 74000-series single door boxcars.

Ann Arbor 74000-74147 series Single Sheathed Box Cars

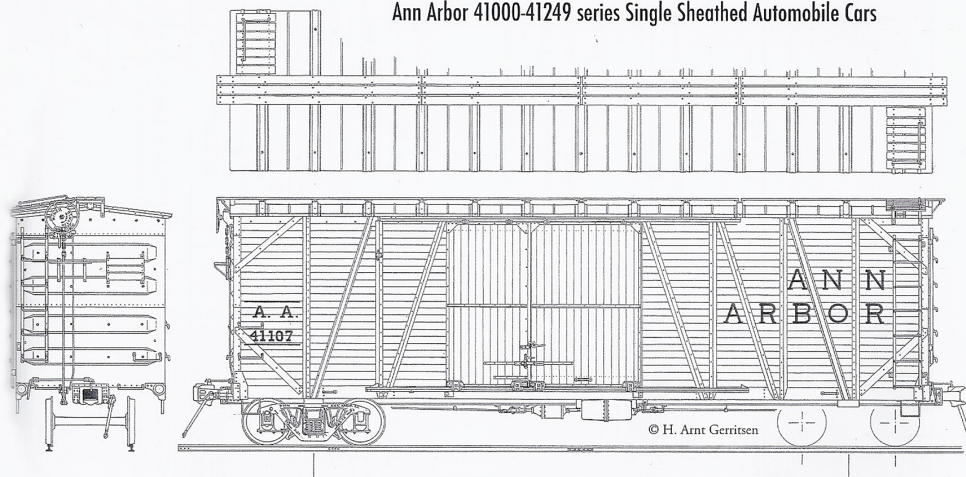


Ted Culotta borrowed these drawings from Arnt and used them to produce HO scale resin models for his Speedwitch Media line of kits.

K110.1 for the 41000-series boxcars

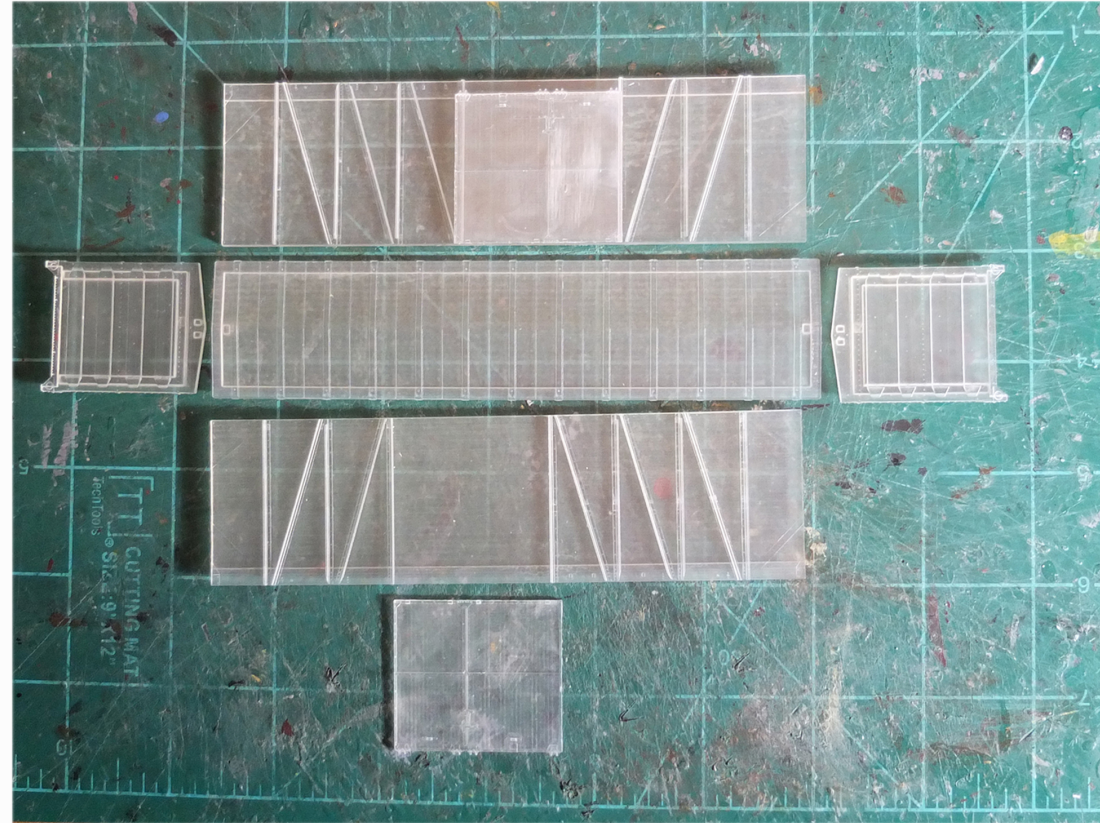
K110.2 for the 74000-series boxcars rebuilt as single door cars

Ann Arbor 41000-41249 series Single Sheathed Automobile Cars



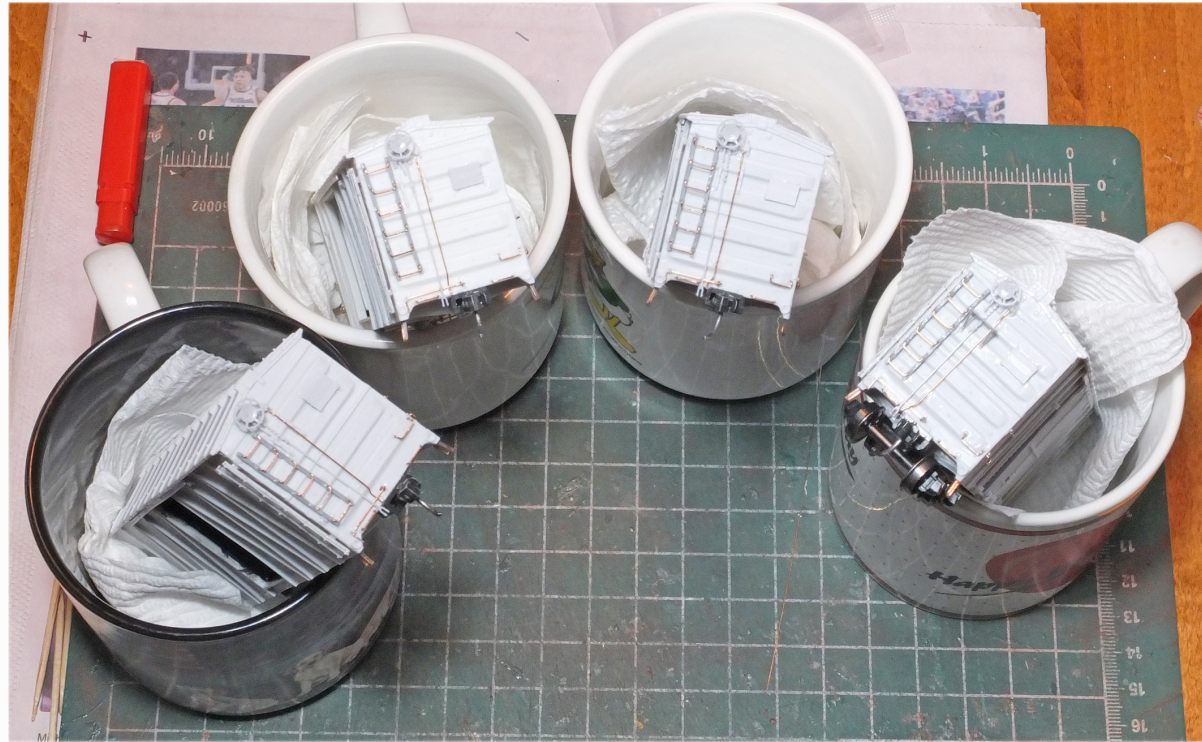
Rob Kirkham expanded his line of 3D printed Shapeways parts to include these parts for the 41000-series cars.

Sides / doors / Hutchins roof / taller Hutchins ends



Parts for the ladders, brake gear, underframe, trucks, and unning board have to be obtained from other sources.

The Speedswitch kits were built as per the instructions except for some modifications to the ends.



**End ladders were fabricated from Tichy ladder stiles and Tichy 18' drop grabs.
Tangent Scale Models Miner brake gear was used instead of the kit parts.
Yarmouth Model Works wood running boards were substituted for the resin kit parts.**



**Cars painted with Scalecoat II Oxide Red.
Lettered with Speedwitch decals included with kits.**

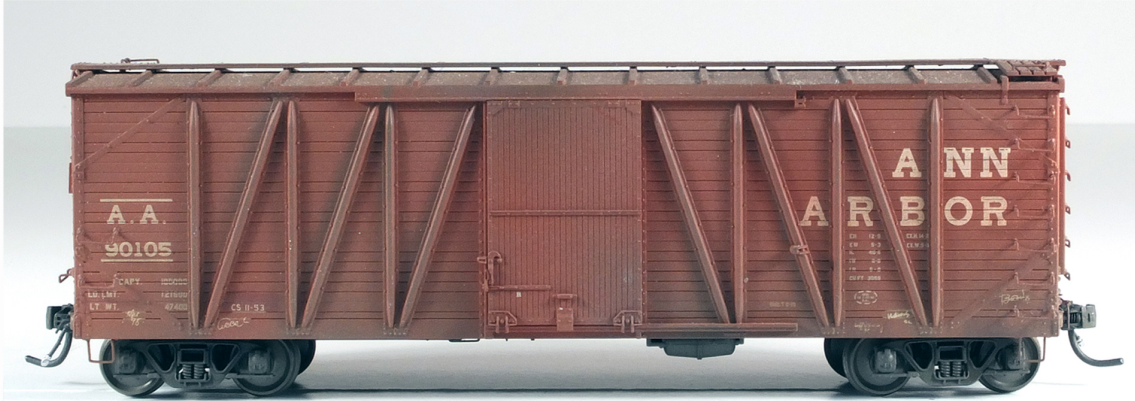


Alan Bell milled out the door openings for these two cars.

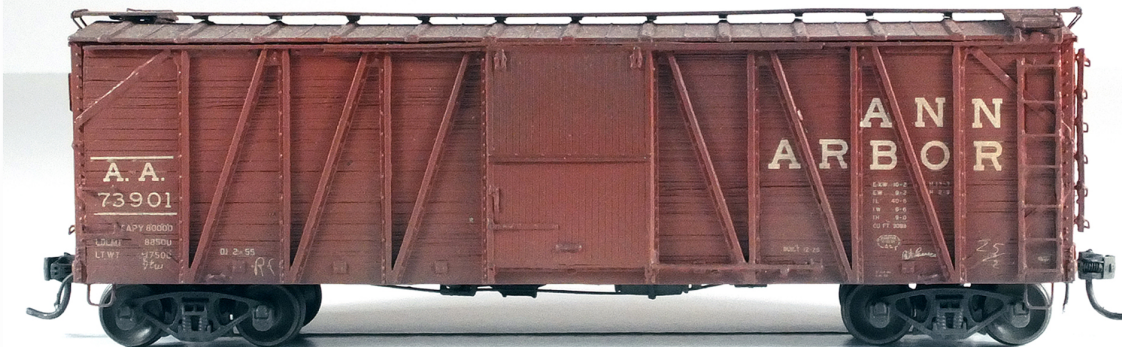


Company Service boxcar X4638 painted with Scalecoat II Engine Black. Decals from the Speedwitch kit + Mark Vaughan Wabash set.

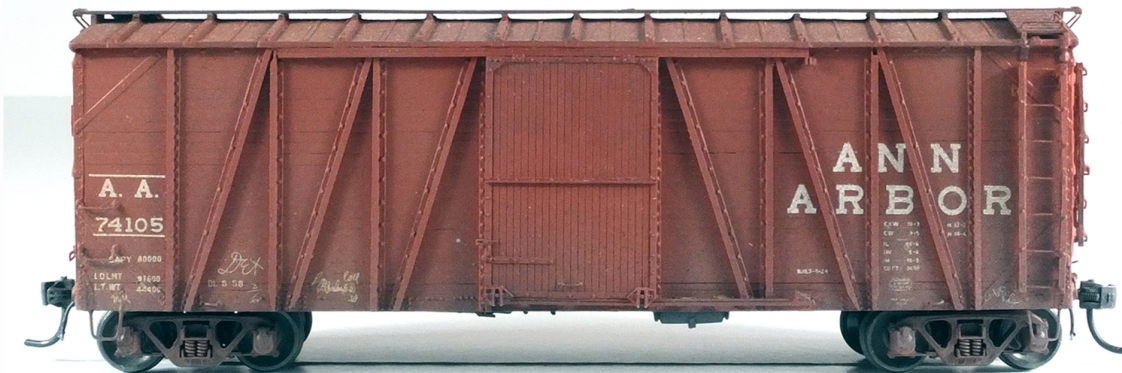
COMPARISON OF PLACEMENT OF 14-INCH ANN ARBOR ROADNAME



AA 90000-90199
'A' above 'B'
Both 'N's in same
end panel



AA 73750-73998
'A' above 'B'
'N' above 'R' in
end panel



AA 41000-41249
AA 74000-74150
'A' above 'R'
'R' only in end panel

Smokebox Graphics
HO scale decal sheet
Ann Arbor RR 40' boxcars
Set DF0487



Smokebox Graphics
P.O.Box 172
Reese MI 48757
www.smokeboxgraphics.com

Smokebox Graphics set DF0487 includes decals to letter the 90000-series single-sheath boxcars (along with other AA steel boxcars). Lettering for other single-sheath boxcar series can be pieced together from other parts of the sheet.

Single-sheath cars use the 14-inch ANN ARBOR road name, 7-inch numbers and 4-inch end lettering.

Decal lettering for reweigh stations and paint ovals are included.

The Ann Arbor Railroad single-sheath cars formed the backbone of the railroad's boxcar fleet for more than thirty years. Even after the railroad began obtaining all-steel cars in 1947, they continued to serve the Ann Arbor for another fifteen years.

**Models of the cars in this presentation
are located in the display room.**

**A PDF of this presentation is available on RPM website or can be
obtained by contacting *agecompanyphotog@gmail.com***