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# IVES TRACKS

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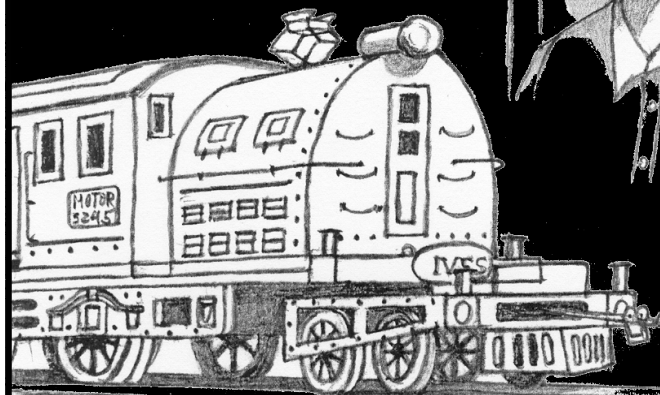
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*Dad,  
Junior  
and  
IVES*



IVES 3245-R

The Story on Page 2

CS 2011

# DAD, JUNIOR AND IVES

(See front cover illustration)

By John Gray I-6662

*(Editors note: John wrote his column as a letter from a father with kids of his own to his dad, reminiscing about an IVES Standard gauge train set purchased for him by his father in the 1950's. Although used, from the early 1930's, the set was in like-new condition, and it represented a catalyst that helped establish a life-long friendship between father and son.)*

Dear Dad,

I just broke out the big old IVES Standard Gauge .3245 electric engine and passenger car set that you bought for me in the 1950's. I know it was a used set then, but it looked just like new. I remember how proud I was of it and all the fun we both had setting it up and playing with it during Christmas.

The set was much bigger than any of the trains my friends on the block had, and even my friend Jimmy next door seemed jealous of it. Those little "0 gauge" sets they had couldn't compare to "Big Blue".

These days when I set them up for my kids, they get so excited because of their large size, and little Tommy says he likes them because they're "made of iron", and not cheap plastic like the other toys.

Anyway, I just thought I'd write a short letter reminding you how much fun you and I had when I was a kid, and how for hours we would tinker with that big IVES set, while mom and sis were in the kitchen preparing supper.

By the way, all the kids here say "hi" to you and grand-mom, and want to thank you for buying me that wonderful set of IVES trains when I was their age.

All those years ago I can still remember hearing mom say, "There's no separating dad, junior and IVES when they get together".

Give my love to mom, and see you both soon!  
Love, son John

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# PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

Don Lewis

Dear Society Member:

York is already 3 weeks behind us as I write this. Amazing how fast the good times that we had are already memories. If you remember a year or so ago I stated in this very column that we live our lives from York to York. We have good memories after we leave and we anticipate good times before we get there. Who lives better than a member of the IVES Train Society?

Continuing and expanding our efforts to document the history of the toy trains manufactured by IVES, the Society's BOD voted to add the study of the offerings of the American Miniature Railway Company as part of our research efforts. This decision was enthusiastically received by those members present at the York Friday meeting.

Speaking of the Friday meeting, it was another huge success. Attendance was well over 70 members and guests. Before the show and tell took place I, on behalf of the BOD, awarded Dave McEntarfer a plaque in recognition of his continued and dedicated efforts as the historian of the IVES Train Society and his computer abilities to maintain our fabulous web site and other communication efforts. Thank you, Dave.

As always show and tell produced some great IVES trains for our review. Each member was enthusiastic in their presentation which is what makes this format so much fun. Some of the highlights were the black 3243, as pictured in the 1928 catalogue, a like new #25 passenger set in its original box with all the particulars, a beautiful one gauge freight set, a dual headlight 3235, and a maroon 3241 set with a not known to exist 1922 observation in maroon. On display were some really great production examples of the train manufacturer which we all hold so dear.

I encourage each and every one of you to share your knowledge of IVES trains. We all have some area of IVES production where we dedicate our focus. Don't be shy. Just send an email of facts to Dave, Marty, or John and we'll do the rest. It's always nice to hear from someone new.

Have a great summer! Happy collecting!

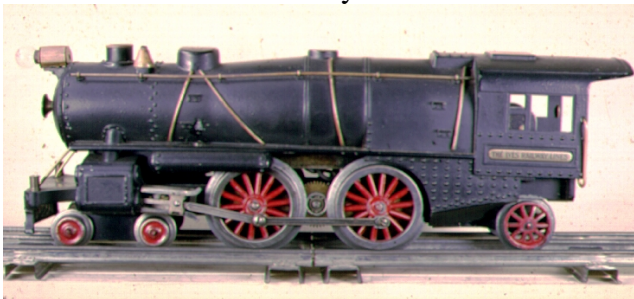
## IVES Transition Years 1928-1930

By: Randy Berger (revised)

### 1928

In June of 1928 The IVES Manufacturing Corporation went into bankruptcy and Lionel and American Flyer<sup>1</sup> jointly bought the company and renamed it The IVES Corporation. What was a sad day for the company was a bonanza for the future collector. The era of IVES trains still being manufactured in Bridgeport, but by the new management lasted only 2 ½ years. This period of time has been designated “the transition years”. Louis Hertz credited Dudley Olney as the originator of the term “TRANSITION ERA” and asked him to define it. He stated that he meant the period from the Lionel/American Flyer takeover in mid 1928 till the end of operations at Bridgeport in 1930. It is sometimes erroneously thought to include 1931-32, but by then the transition, from pure IVES, to nothing but Lionel, was over. Excess IVES equipment was renumbered and sold off, and Lionel equipment was substituted bearing IVES name but not its style. We are only concerned here with the years 1928 through 1930 and the equipment dispatched from Holland Avenue. Since my area of interest is WIDE gauge, I will deal mainly with that area, but O-gauge had many innovations and features of its own.

It is necessary to start with the beginning of 1928, noting the introduction of IVES new features to discuss the transition years. The company had started the year with a bang. Introducing their new die-cast #1134 steam loco rolling out of Bridgeport on ball-bearing motors and using the new coupling system designated “snake-track pull”, they were by many accounts the hit of the New York toy show.



Neither Flyer nor Lionel had a WIDE gauge

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<sup>1</sup> Reports of other manufacturers participating have yet to be documented.

steam engine, and snake-track pull allowed a smooth transition of even reverse curves. Lionel and American Flyer eventually copied the idea. IVES had advertised and made prototypes of new 22 inch long passenger cars. Lack of financing forced them to forego tooling for these and acquire cars and parts from American Flyer and Lionel. The first half of 1928, before the bankruptcy, saw little production and these pure IVES products are extremely hard to find. For example, the two-window caboose (sometimes known as the four-window caboose), the red and white boxcar, and the 3236 loco with two headlights are scarce examples of early 1928 production. Some items have yet to surface, such as the black cab/orange frame #3242 Nighthawk loco<sup>2</sup> and an IVES tank car with snake-track pull couplers. I believe all the 1928 catalogued items were manufactured and will eventually turn up.

The nameplates located on the bottoms of IVES motors contained the name of the corporation at that time: **“THE IVES MFG CORP”**.

The nameplates were changed in the latter half of 1928 to: **“THE IVES CORP”** reflecting the new name of the company. The old Mfg. plates were shelved, but not discarded, and can be found on later production motors.

The latter half of 1928 with the backing and collaboration of American Flyer and Lionel produced some remarkable trains and accessories. Using American Flyer freight cars mounted on IVES trucks and the genius who coordinated the new color schemes gave IVES a refreshing and colorful new freight line, and they dropped their old tank, box, cattle, hopper, and caboose. The new colors extended to the accessories also as IVES dropped the drab trim of the late teens and twenties and opted for bright eye-catching toys. None of the Flyer-bodied cars use snake-track couplers, but employ American Flyer’s bracket including steps. IVES apparently liked Flyer’s coupler bracket as they made a simplified version and used it for their passenger cars. The old IVES cuts are still used in the

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<sup>2</sup> The black cab/orange frame 3242 Nighthawk loco has been documented and photographed.



### IVES Transition Years continued from page 3....

catalogue for some of the freight sets and some new pages are added to display the new passenger cars from American Flyer. One mistake noted here is that IVES apparently thought they were getting a hopper car from American Flyer and had brass plates made up numbered 20-194,



194 being the IVES number for a hopper car. Flyer sent their "sand" car, which was really a gondola, a car type IVES had never made in WIDE gauge. The reason is simple - American Flyer never had a hopper till at least 1931. IVES painted the gondola dull black and applied the 20-194 plates. 1928 also saw the introduction of the 3245 St. Paul cab loco on a twelve-wheel chassis, and the black and cadet-blue versions of the #3243 with brass window frames. If you read the fine print in the 1928 catalog, you discover that IVES would sell you any of their big engines with any set of deluxe passenger cars. Both 3 and 4 car sets could be had with an 1134, a 3245 or a 3243. The Flyer cars, numbered 241, 242, and 243, were either dull black with red roofs, or light green. The IVES bodied cars, designated 187, 188, and 189 came in cadet blue w/orange transoms, orange with white transoms, light green with white transoms or gray with light green transoms. They both used the same 12-wheel truck but the IVES cars quite properly were minus the center axle and wheels. Catalogued as a set, the cadet-blue cars came with a cadet-blue #3243, the gray cars came with a gray #3245 and I think the orange cars and the light green cars with either a 3243 or 3245 in like color or in black. The IVES-bodied cars are all three manufacturers in one. They have American Flyer air tanks on all three cars and a Lionel #490 observation railing on the 189. You can see the hand-drawn observation railing support in the 1928 catalog. Special brass window frames were installed on these cars to upgrade them. The 14-inch cars were modified

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by using Lionel's 310 observation platform, and came in three colors, orange, red, and red with black roofs. If the catalog is to be believed, the #184 combine came only in orange. The IVES #3236 cab was replaced by Lionel's #8 with a skirt attached to raise the body to the proper screw height. The red #8 cab appears to have been made in 1928 only. From personal observation it appears the Flyer tank was used in 1928 only and the Lionel 215 tank body replaced it in 1929. The 1929 catalogue shows this, again probably hand-drawn by the same fellow who so gracefully drew the observation railing support in 1928. An accessory introduced in 1928 is the #334 automatic crossing gate.



It is made from the base of an IVES 216 manual crossing, utilizing Lionel's #77 crossing gate. It is pictured with a small watchman's shanty with what appears to be the window frame from an O-gauge #133 and a Lionel #68 or #068 warning sign. It has never been documented as pictured in 1928. What is referred to as the 1928 version has a shanty (which has been attributed to American Flyer), with a rubber-stamped window and a splatter paint job as used on some street lights and the famous alkali-dust covered #3257 and has no warning sign. The shanty is orange and the gate is pea-green. One variation comes with a small section of the picket fence where the shanty is supposed to be. This same color variation was also produced with brass windows, but that is probably a 1929 upgrade. In 1929 two small brass windows are installed in the shanty and it is illuminated. The shanty is now painted maroon. In 1930 the gate is painted black, probably because Lionel supplied it in black. I have not personally observed a gate that is

#### **IVES Transition Years continued from page 4....**

illuminated, but since Lionel illuminated theirs in 1930, it seems probable to find the IVES version the same way. It is a difficult accessory to acquire and if the shanty is truly American Flyer, it also combines all three manufacturers in one package.

#### **1929**

The IVES 17" cars and the 3243 are dropped completely in 1929, but the long-cab #3245 is introduced, a fair trade I think. Utilizing only four castings and existing #3237 tooling, IVES created a truly beautiful engine and did it economically. The 1929 3245 is trimmed in nickel, again superceding Lionel and Flyer with this innovation. New paint jobs and the addition of a copper-plated set as the top of the line gave IVES a colorful lineup and it appeared they were making a real comeback. They reintroduced their 194 hopper car, but kept the gondola and renumbered it 20-198. They also acquired Lionel's #219 crane, numbered it 199 and this '29 version uses Lionel's 200-series trucks with a long-shank coupler bent to match the normal coupler height. The coupler is mounted in Lionel's triangular pocket and you can see where the tool boxes were removed to allow the installation of the IVES coupler. The Lionel #215 tank body is mounted on a Flyer tank frame, which is modified by a stiffening strap soldered to the base of the frame. It uses IVES trucks and couplers and once again, all three manufacturers are combined in a single unit. Since they had dropped the car series 187, 188, and 189, they introduced a new series of four-wheel truck cars numbered 244, 245, and 246. These cars appear in one set only, the Northern Limited. The #3236 gets a cadet-blue color scheme with two cars #185 and 186 and sports a black and orange scheme with three cars #184, 185 and 186. The orange and flat black set is "The Interstate Limited". The #3242 comes in black with Cardinal-red frame and four red cars with flat black roofs. The tank car pictured in the Universal Fast Freight displays some extra hand-drawn domes indicating the Lionel #215 body. Flyer box and cattle cars are substituted for IVES in the circus set. Lionel stations and

accessories are pictured side-by-side with IVES own. Lionel lettering or identification is obliterated sometimes rather crudely. The divers helmet signal which IVES numbered 350 just has the die-cast raised lettering filed off.



They are given unique paint combinations which distinguish them from Lionel's. Again, IVES use of color in the transition years is dramatic.

#### **1930**

Sometime in 1929 Lionel bought out Flyer's interest in IVES and 1930 sees the introduction of Lionel rolling stock, both freight and passenger. The Lionel-supplied freight cars use snake-track pull couplers unlike the Flyer-bodied cars. The big passenger sets using Lionel's #418, 419, 431, and 490 bodies are the orange Olympian with black roofs, the blue National Limited with red roofs and the black Chief with red roofs. These cars mounted on IVES trucks assume an aesthetic appearance not apparent when wobbling about on their original wheel sets. The diner is normally found only in the National Limited, although Olympian diners have been found in original three-car sets – the diner replacing the coach. Lou Hertz has stated that IVES ran out of coaches and Lionel supplied them with diners. Mr. Hertz also maintained he had never seen an authentic Chief diner. All freight cars are now Lionel-bodied with the exception of the coke, flat, and hopper. IVES chose to retain its own hopper and upgraded it by placing a colorful decal in the center of the car,

**IVES Transition Years continued from page 5....**  
the same decal used on the O-gauge 1125 tender and #89 water tank.



It is easily understood why American Flyer did not supply their hopper - they simply did not have one, but why IVES did not use Lionel's hopper is a mystery. Perhaps the brackets supporting the snake couplers presented a problem. Can you picture a black and red Lionel #216 with IVES trucks – gorgeous! The IVES 1930 catalog is probably the most accurate toy train catalog ever made. Almost every item in its exact color is pictured in this catalog. The 350 divers helmet signal is now cut down just above where the Lionel lettering is located. The 199 crane is modified with red roof and tool boxes and now uses IVES trucks so the bent coupler is not required.

No Lionel-bodied circus equipment is documented to my knowledge. 1930 equipment is apparently harder to find than 1929, probably because of the depression, which started in 1929. One significant cost-cutting measure was the use of the early 1928 name plate on the bottom of the motor. Many definite 1930 locos have been found with the earlier "THE IVES MFG CORP" plate. This can aid in determination of year. For instance, if you have a black/orange #3236 with the "THE IVES MFG CORP" plate, it is definitely from a 1930 "TIGER" set and NOT a 1929 "Interstate Limited".

If any of you have additional or dissenting information, we can all benefit by our pooled knowledge. Please write or email me at [mrberger2@comcast.net](mailto:mrberger2@comcast.net).

## **Paul Stimmler** **TCA Library and Historical Committee**

In an email sent to Randy Berger on his IVES Transition Years article;

### Randy

Reference your opening line on page 3 and the "1930" heading on page 5; I can say that we DO have documentation that others besides American Flyer and Lionel were involved in the Ives purchase. As of 6 months ago under the direction of TCA Librarian Jan Athey I archived a letter in the Cotts collection from AF President W.O. Coleman to author Lou Hertz confirming that Hafner was involved financially and that Hafner got out at the same time that AF did. (Meaning the following year of 1929)

I submitted to the TCA an article for the Quarterly which they haven't yet published. Editor Mark Boyd tells me he wants to concentrate on modern stuff for awhile.

One could also make an argument that A. C. Gilbert was indirectly involved from research by a TCA member Herb Wasserman at the NY Public Library published in 1984 in the TCA *Quarterly* indicating Lionel offering their interest in Meccano of America in late Spring 1928 to AC Gilbert and the funds from that transaction applied to the Ives purchase. I haven't personally seen the latter, but I have personally handled and archived the former.

Finally I don't know enough about Ives to make any meaningful suggestions about the substance of the balance of your article, but it is really very interesting, for which my hearty congratulations.

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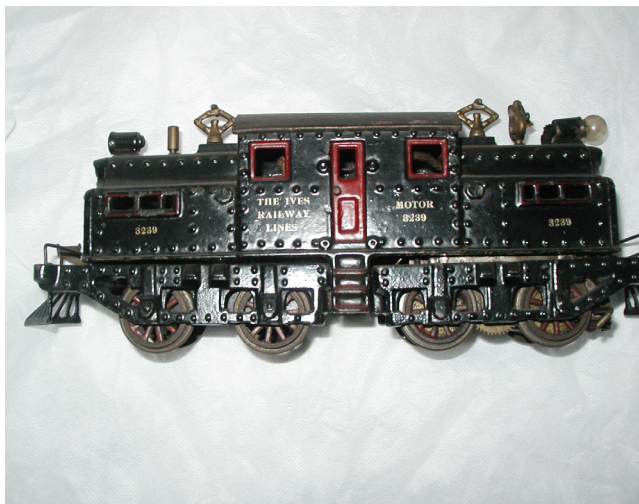
# IVES ONE GAUGE 3239

## HAVE YOU SEEN THIS TRANSFORMER?

By: Randy Berger

I recently purchased an early IVES 3239 one gauge locomotive. I judge the year to be 1914 or later because it has 3239 sideframes whereas the earliest 3239s used 3240 sideframes.

**(Reportedly: non-matching side frames 1913-16, matching side frames 1917-1920)**



It has a small transformer built into the center cab. The output of the transformer goes to the headlight.



Footnote:

*We call it a transformer, but in actuality it is a one winding coil.*

I was assuming that it was a step-down transformer to supply a lower voltage to the headlight. I hooked it up to a transformer and set the output of the transformer at 17.5 volts as read by my meter. The output of the small built-in transformer was 17.4 volts, seeming to act as a small resistance rather than a step-down transformer.

If any one has any ideas, I would like to hear them. This is the second 3239 that I have found this way. The other one is from 1913 as it has 3240 sideframes. I have a 3239 from approx. 1919 that does not have that transformer. All opinions are welcome.

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### **Editors Note:**

Randy, I checked my engines and found the following information; of the (4) engines I own (3) have this transformer.

**3240 early**, with chains and non-matching axles has the transformer.

**3239 black early**, with non-matching axles has the transformer.

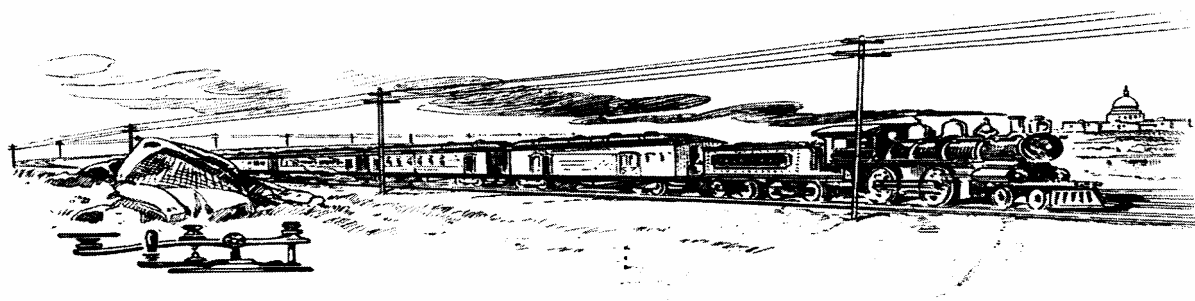
**3239 black later**, with matching axles has the transformer

**3239 gray later still**, with matching axles does not have the transformer. Therefore, sometime around 1919 they eliminated the transformer. The need for it and reason for its demise, other than cost savings, is a mystery. Can anyone help?

## KEY SOCIETY POINTS OF CONTACT

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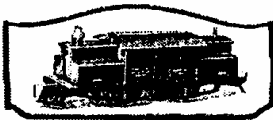


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