

**A PUBLICATION OF THE IVES TRAIN SOCIETY**

**JUNE 2010**

# IVES TRACKS



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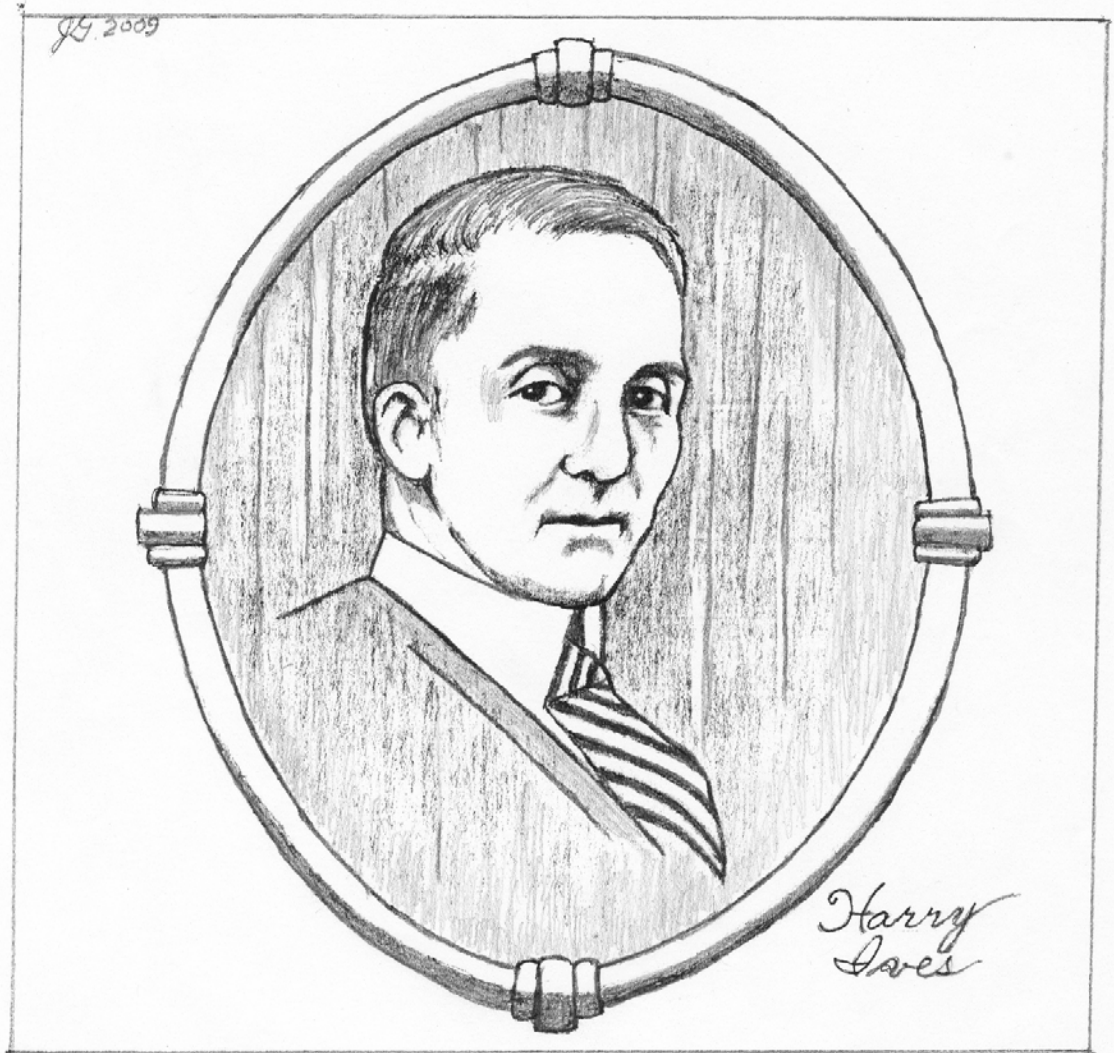
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*The Story on Page 2*

## **HARRY C. IVES – by John Gray I-6662**

(See front cover illustration)

At the age of 29, Edward Ives founded the Ives Manufacturing Company of Bridgeport, CT. It was 1868, the year his son Harry was born. It was the first American company dedicated solely to the production of toys. During these early years it produced an interesting assortment of charming, high quality toys, made of pressed sheet metal and cast iron. But in time the Ives Company came under pressure from European competitors like Bing, Marklin, Carrette, among others, and at one time the German company, Bing, claimed to be the world's largest toy company.

Even though Ives' position was heavily challenged by foreign imports, its reputation as America's premiere toy manufacturer remained intact. More than likely, during this time, the young Harry Ives was being raised in his father's business; in those days sons usually followed their father's footsteps in the business world.

By 1900, at the age of 32, Harry Ives was well established in his father's company, having been taught the ins-and-outs of the trade, and the operation of a large, successful toy manufacturing facility. Eventually he inherited the position as president of his father's company and oversaw the production of some of the finest toy trains and accessories ever made. However, during the early decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century, domestic competition from Lionel, American Flyer, Dorfan and Boucher, plus a barrage of unfair public promotion ads against Ives by Lionel, pressured Ives into recapitulating by borrowing large sums of money to remain competitive during this period of fierce competition. Consequently, Harry Ives sought to expand company profits by producing a new line of metal toy boats, propelled by clockwork motors. His interest in the American Merchant Marine may have prompted this new venture. He had a personal involvement with the boat line, as he did with his toy trains, and patented the special design of the boats motor mechanism. The toy boats were a modest success, but it was not enough to keep the company financially "afloat" in the now crowded field of toy manufacturing. Efforts at refinancing eventually failed, and by 1927 Harry Ives had become the Chairman of the Board, to be replaced by Charles R. Johnson as "President" of the Ives Corporation.

Finally in 1928 Ives was no longer able to repay its debts and filed for bankruptcy under the U.S. Bankruptcy Law on July 7 of that year, owing more than \$188,000 to its creditors, a large sum of money at that time. The sad state of Ives' financial affairs belied its enormous success as a toy train manufacturer. Eventually, however, the joint purchase of Ives by Lionel and American Flyer put the Company out of business forever in 1932. But the wonderful legacy of the Ives Company, and its founder Edward Ives and his son, Harry, lives on. Thanks to the toy train collectors everywhere, and the IVES TRAIN SOCIETY, we can continue to appreciate the position Ives holds in History.

The front cover portrait of Harry Ives depicts a man with a calm countenance and subtle smile, as though reassuring us today that while the Ives Company may be gone, it still lives in the heart of every toy train collector.

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## **PRESIDENT'S COLUMN – Don Lewis**

Dear Fellow Society Member:

As train collectors we are an interesting group of people. We measure our time from York to York and sometimes from one toy train purchase to the next toy train purchase. I am writing this right after the April 2010 York meet so this thought is prominent on my mind. I hope those of you that were at York were able to add a new IVES toy train to your collections.

As evidenced by my count, the Society's York Friday membership meeting was well attended, and a huge success. Along with myself, presentations were made by Les Morris, who shared some interesting pieces, and some of the secrets related to those pieces, also Dave McEntarfer, John Schleicher, Clyde Easterly, John DeSantis, Clem Clemens, John Gilmer, Vince Giovannitti, and Richard Hooper. Future articles in our publications will display some of the interesting photos and go into further detail concerning these pieces.

As I'm sure you heard from Dave McEntarfer via email and at the meeting, our old password has system disappeared. Please contact Dave via email at [ivesboy@roadrunner.com](mailto:ivesboy@roadrunner.com) and he will send you your new user ID and Password.

As I shared with you at the meeting, the Society is financially sound. We continue to contain costs while providing more benefits to our members. John Basile, our editor, will look to include more color photos in this year's issue of TIES.

We are again going to enter into the fundraising arena. Jerry Loman has offered to produce the little IVES station that was never made. He will be developing a prototype for us which will have a sign board that says The Ives Train Society. His generous offer will allow the Society to sell the stations at a price point of around \$45. We'll keep you posted as this project moves forward.

As always, this issue of TRACKS contains some great articles. Hopefully this will encourage some of you to share your knowledge about some aspect of IVES toy trains.

Trains can take a back seat for the summer. Enjoy your family and friends at those barbeques and picnics. Those times create better memories than your last IVES train purchase.

Have a GREAT summer!

**RESTORING AN IVES ONE GAUGE  
No. 183 OBSERVATION CAR  
BY NEAL WOOD**

I bought this car from Tony Hay in the late 90's. Tony noted that he had never seen a No. 183 with air tanks and thought it might be a pre-production car with the tanks as shown in the IVES 1912 catalog. Also the "pull chains" on each end of the car simulated actual passenger cars of that era. Realizing that I had an unusual very early No. 183 car, I decided to document the details of this car with photographs (pre-digital) so I could restore it to its original condition. As you will note the transoms were divided into panes (see *figure 1 on page 5*) with small vertical lines as show in the 1912 catalog.

As you know, these early 181,182 and 183 cars had a gray-green interior and a black undercarriage. This must have made the painting of these cars labor intensive since they could not be dip painted, like Lionel was doing. I'm not sure how long IVES continued with this complicated painting design, but later cars were painted (dip painted or sprayed) dark green all over. To duplicate this multi color scheme, I first used a gray primer all over. Then I matched the interior color (more about this later) and carefully sprayed the gray-green interior, using masking tape to prevent "over-spray". After the interior gray-green had dried, I sprayed the bottom black, again using masking tape to prevent over-spray. Next I masked all the windows and doors and sprayed the dark green paint on the exterior of the car. The roof was then painted with lime-green paint. Using a commercial Beugler pin striping tool, I striped the roof with the bodies dark green and striped the body with the roofs lime-

green. Shading the roof with the simulated brown ash accumulation along the outer bottom edges presented a problem. Doing it "freehand" would result in an uneven paint application. Therefore, I built an adjustable painting frame (see *figure 2 on page 5*) and after adjusting and testing for delicate brown shading, I mounted the roof in a vertical position as shown, and slid the brown spray can along its track on the base. Several passes of the spray can produced the varied brown tinting of the roof edges. Finally, using Janice Bennett's dry transfers, I applied the lettering and the numbers to complete the restoration. This was not a solo effort because I had acquired nine other cars from this set (181,182,183) and all needed restoration. I decided to restore one set to match my early No. 183. Two of these cars (181 and 182) were early versions, with gray-green interior, no air-tanks or chains, but they fit in with my No. 183 to complete a set. (see *figure 3 on page 6*). Needless to say the remaining No. 181, 182, and 183 cars were restored using the dark green paint all over the cars, as IVES produced their later cars.

Painting is the key to successful train restorations. I was disappointed with most of the available restoration paints, due to color mismatches, drying time and finish gloss. I had found that a few Rustoleum spray paints closely matched some Lionel colors and yielded an acceptable finish. However, I could not find commercial spray paints to match

**-3- Continued on page 4**

## RESTORING AN IVES ONE GAUGE

### No. 183 OBSERVATION CAR

#### Continued from page 3

most IVES colors. Therefore, I began to mix my own paints. Using basic gloss colors, in small cans, of Rustoleum or One Shot sign paint, thoroughly mixed; I would estimate a trial mix ratio and apply predetermined drops of paint, using a toothpick, onto a small white card blank. After the predetermined number of drops of the estimated paint are on the card I would mix the paint (with a toothpick) until these paints were well mixed on the card. Usually these first mixes did not yield a good color match with the desired original color. Therefore, I would adjust the paint ratios and continue to make trial color cards (see *figure 4 page 5*) until I arrived at the proper ratio of paint drops that matched the original color. Depending on how much painting you have to do, you select the proper number of ounces that you would need to finish the painting project. Then on a scientific Beam scale (can measure to 1/10<sup>th</sup> of a gram) ) I fill the spray paint bottle (Preval Sprayer) with the predetermined number of ounces of the major paint color and record the total weight (bottle plus paint) in grams. Deducting the weight (in grams) of the bottle empty (predetermined), I then have the gram weight of the paint in the bottle. Now using the accepted paint ratios, I figure how many grams of the other paint(s) of this mix are needed. I then set the Beam scale to the desired weight of

the second color and carefully add this paint color to the bottle until the balance scale indicates the proper amount of the second paint has been added to the bottle. If a third, or fourth color is needed the same procedure of setting the scale to the next higher predetermined weights and appropriate amounts of paint are added to the bottle. When the various paints are in the spray bottle, they are thoroughly mixed. I then put a drop of this mixed paint on my original test card to verify that it matches the test card mix. Once in a while this process goes wrong and there is a discernable difference between the test card mix and the bottle mix. Sometimes this can be adjusted by trial and error until the desired color is achieved. This whole procedure is messy and requires a lot of clean up but the final results are well worth it. The actual spray painting of the colors is accomplished using my home made rotating "Toy Train Painting Cradle" (see *figure 5 on page 5*) as described in the May 2004 issue of Tracks. The cradle is shown with a mounted late IVES No. 183 car that is ready for primer painting.

I discovered a neat way to simulate the varied color transom windows. I place drop of red paint on the left side of the transom windows, then add a drop of orange next to it, then a drop of yellow next to that, and finally a drop of green on the right. Then I add a drop or two of paint thinner and gently rock the car back and forth to spread and blend the colors.





**No. 183 CAR IN NEED OF RESTORATION**



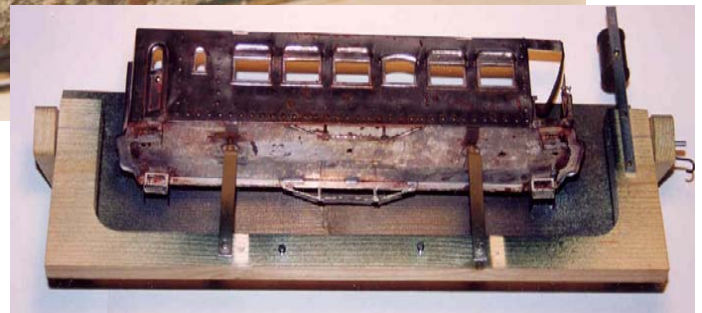
**EARLY CHAINS**



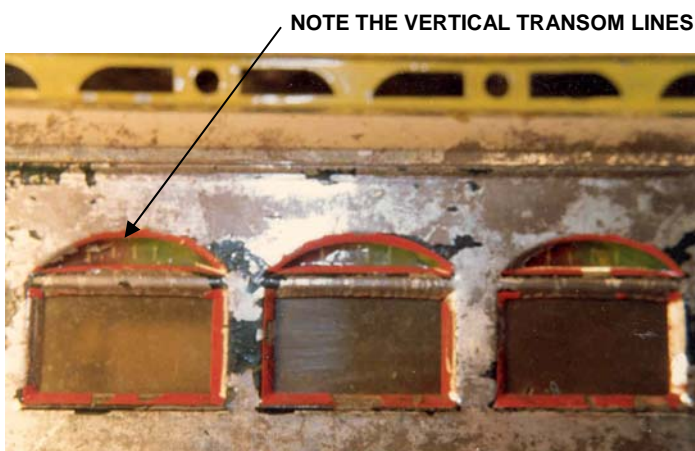
**AIR TANKS**



**FIGURE 4. TRIAL CARDS**



**FIGURE 5. SPECIAL PAINTING CRADLE**



**NOTE THE VERTICAL TRANSOM LINES**

**Figure 1. TRANSOMS**



**Figure 2 . SPECIAL JIG FOR THE ROOFS**



# THE FINAL PRODUCT



Figure 3 . COMPLETE SET





## What's in a number? By Dave McEntarfer

Pictured here are a few Ives trains that just don't get the respect they deserve for their rarity. Ives often used the same number for many years, sometime decades. Even though the number stayed the same, the piece would change dramatically. Here are a few instances of trains that have unique numbers. They look common, but the numbers make them unique.



In 1921 Ives cataloged Outfit No. 21 which featured a clockwork locomotive with the number 21. It was contained in one set and was not offered for sale separately.



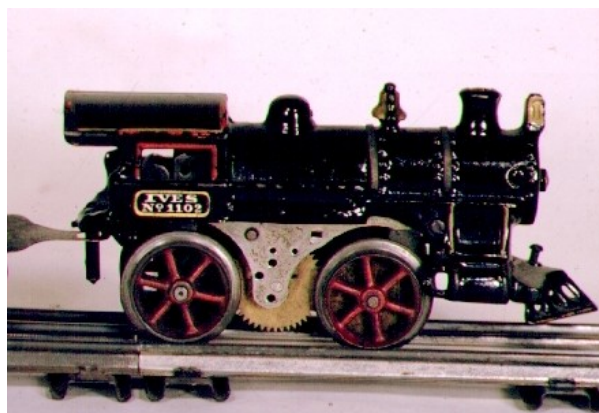
In 1924 Ives cataloged outfits No. 690 and 691. Both contained a 171 Buffet and a 173 observation. This was the only year the 170 series cars were cataloged. Ives continued to sell the 170 series cars for several more years but always numbered them as 170-171-172. The observation above was the only one numbered 173.



Wide gauge No. 245 passenger car—1929



Ives first cataloged the 60 series freight cars in 4 wheel versions in 1913. Those first two years Ives used the numbers 554 (box), 556 (tank) and 557 (caboose). The box car and caboose were lithographed and still carried the 60 series number, but the tank car was painted and stamped with the number. Thus the 556 tank car pictured above became one rare car when the number was changed in 1915 to 566.

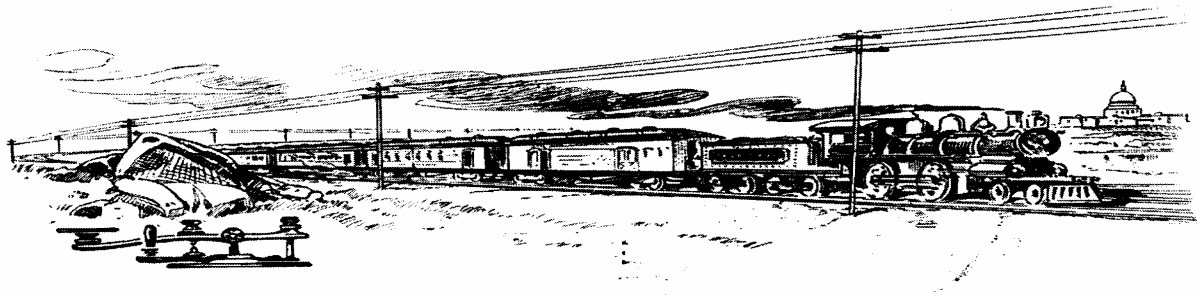


In 1912 Ives cataloged Outfit No. 1102S, which came with a 1100 electric and 2 passenger cars. For some reason a very few of these engines show up with the set number (1102) on the etched plate under the cab. To the best of my knowledge this engine is identical to an 1100.

## KEY SOCIETY POINTS OF CONTRACT

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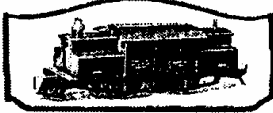
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