

A PUBLICATION OF THE IVES TRAIN SOCIETY

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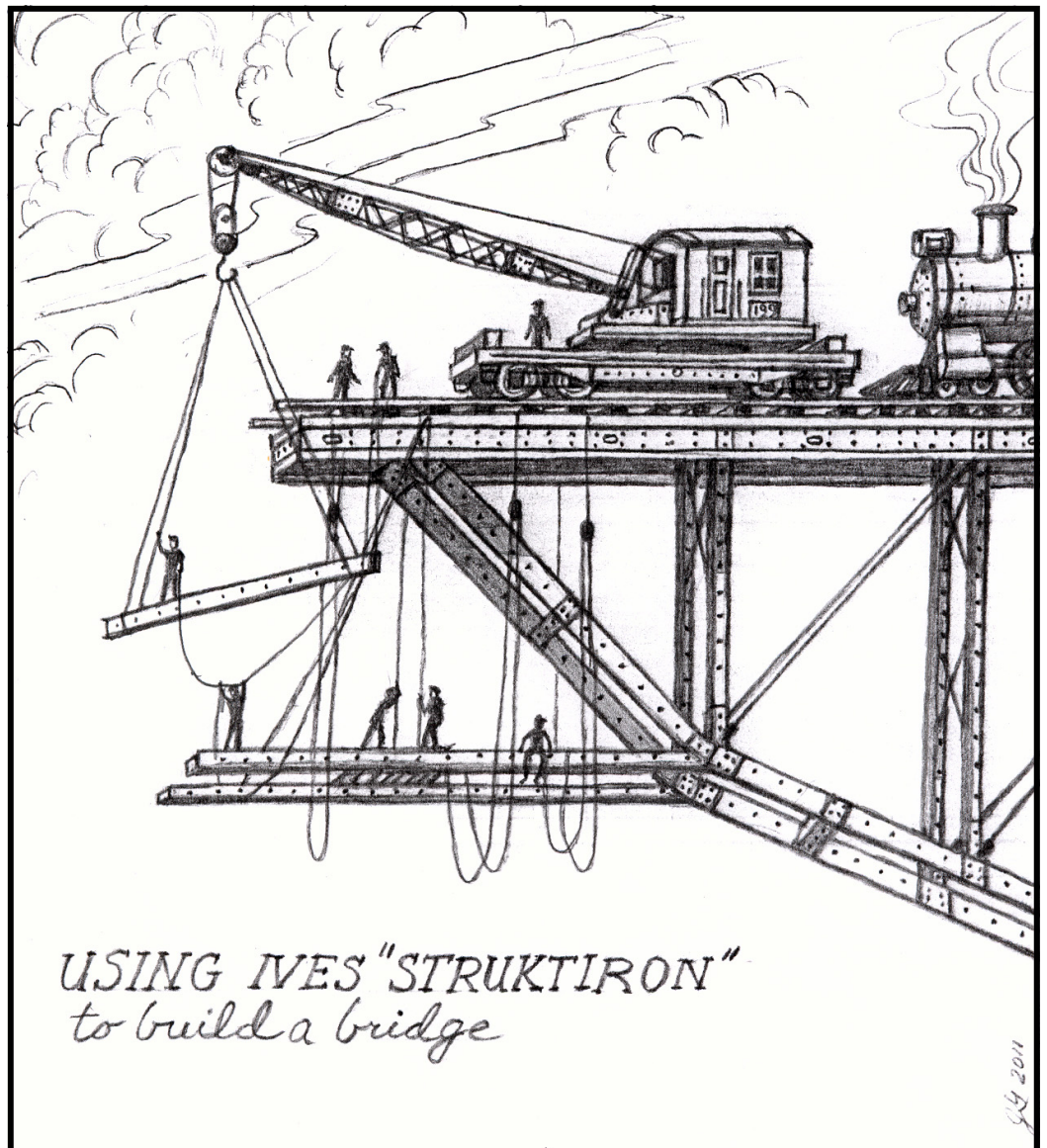
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*USING IVES "STRUKTIRON"
to build a bridge*

USING IVES “STRUKTIRON” TO BUILD A BRIDGE

(See front cover illustration)

By John Gray I-6662

PRESIDENT’S COLUMN

Don Lewis

During the latter half of the 19th Century, America’s railways were expanding so rapidly, it became necessary to engineer larger and stronger bridges to cross the nation’s major waterways. Up to that time wooden structures were sufficient, but as steam engines became larger and heavier, and freight and passenger trains became longer, bridges made of iron and steel were essential to support the enormous weight loads.

This mode of modern construction was not lost on the IVES Company of Bridgeport. It chose to broaden its product line by offering a metal construction set called “Struktiron” starting in 1913, and it was catalogued until about 1917.

These types of toy construction sets were likewise offered early on by Meccano, American Builder, and Gilbert. American Flyer didn’t offer a similar set until 1938, and Lionel finally came on board in 1947.

But Harry Ives stayed ahead of the competition by offering a “corner gusset” to strengthen the corner components of the Struktiron sets, giving them a structural advantage over the competition.

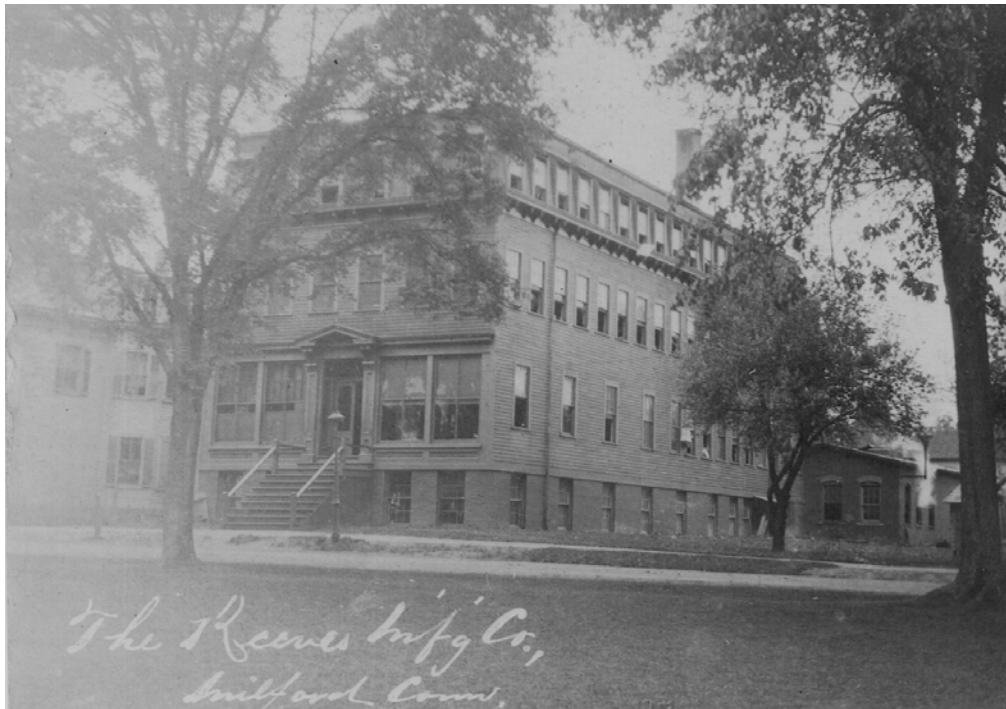
This quarterly cover illustration depicts a team of bridge builders using IVES Struktiron to assemble a large bridge. The scene also includes a Lionel-Ives No 199 derrick to assist. The construction crew in the heavy assembly project, much the same as a youngster would have done in construction his own toy trestles and bridges for his IVES train sets.

Struktiron was just one of the many innovative products marketed by IVES at that time that activated the imaginations of both kids and adults alike.

**Reeves Factory & Clockwork
Motors for IVES Mfg. 1900-28
By Paul T. Stimmler**

According to famed toy historian Lou Hertz, Star Manufacturing founded in 1888 in New Haven Ct supplied clockwork motors to Ives Manufacturing in Bridgeport Connecticut for their line of toy clockwork motors to Ives Manufacturing in Bridgeport Connecticut for their line of toy trolleys and trains throughout the 1890's. That company was subsequently purchased in 1900 by the father and son team of William and Edmund Reeves who renamed it Reeves manufacturing Company and moved the company to Milford Connecticut. In addition to continuing to supply clockwork motors for toys to Ives it was also in the business of manufacturing carpet sweepers. Around 1905 they introduced hand powered vacuum cleaners, and in 1912 electric powered ones for the home and office. We found ourselves wondering if they manufactured electric motors for vacuum cleaners, if they may also have supplied

electric motors to Ives. Around 1913 they began to produce traction motors for real trolleys. But as the trolley traction motor business gradually declined with the growing popularity of automobiles, they turned to other products to supplement the mix and stay solvent. That included a few toys of their own design and manufacture such as a toy airplane carnival ride called the "Reeves Air-E-Go-Round". This is a picture of their factory then located at 134 Broad Street in Milford around the summer of 1915 (note the open factory windows) and printed on a postcard. Unfortunately it is a bit faded but it is all we have. The plant was 4 blocks from Milford Bay on the Atlantic Ocean and the NH railroad tracks ran right behind it. The company seems to have disappeared with so many others in the depths of the Great depression around 1935. Today the old Reeves factory building....."is still there but has been converted to beautiful condominiums".....Ms. Connie Smith of the Milford Chamber advised in a recent phone call. This is just a piece of little known and forgotten Ives history.....



IVES #504 SET

(Possibly a Sears Set)

BY JOHN BASILE

1919-1922: The #504 set consists of (2) brown 129 Saratoga parlor cars, (1) green 130 buffet car, and (1) black 3253 locomotive with red trim. In addition, the set contains (2) 9 inch freight cars; (1) 127 cattle car and (1) 12584 Salt Lake Route box car. All cars had same type IVB riveted trucks with riveted couplers and blackened wheel centers. The set came packed in a Sears's shipping box with all the cars, track (22 straights, 8 curved), controller, electric clip and track connectors all neatly packed with old cardboard dividers taped in place. I am sure that the dividers came from another box, possibly the original set box, because they had grommets that had been used to previously attach them. Interestingly, the dividers although very deteriorated seemed to fit reasonably well. The set was very dirty and probably hadn't been used in many years; my guess it was last used sometime before WWII.

I bought the set from a friend who lives close by. He buys trains but is not a TCA member. He purchased it from a man in 2010 that had recently purchased it at auction in NY. That man informed my friend that when he purchased it the auctioneer said it came from the original family. As I examined each of the 129s they each had a small typed tag attached. One said "To Mom from Paul" and the other said "To Dad from Paul". Each had a small string to attach it to the middle roof strut.

The box is fourth class mail from Sears Roebuck and Co. of Chicago, Ill. It is addressed to: Geo. T Lehrter, Canton, Ohio, 1400 (can't read) Ave.

My TCA York table-mate, Bill Greenbaum is a subscriber to ancestry.com. Bill found some interesting information from 1910 and 1930 censuses and 1918 draft registration.

George T. Lehrter based on age was born in 1880 to 1881 in Harmony, Ohio. He was a photo engraver. In 1910 he lived in Fort Wayne, Indiana. In 1918 he registered for the draft in Nashville, Tennessee, but never served. From the 1930 census George is living in Buffalo, New York with his son Paul. His son was born in Indiana and in 1930 Paul is 19 years old and therefore born around 1911.

From this I conclude that Paul had a nice train set which he shared with his parents. I would guess that the original box deteriorated and was replaced with the Sears box which I suppose had something else shipped to the Lehrter's. This box is heavy with stapled corners; it may have been selected since the whole set could fit in it with the extra cars, but without the boxed Jefferson transformer. Because of the completeness, the set was carefully preserved even though it has plenty of wear.

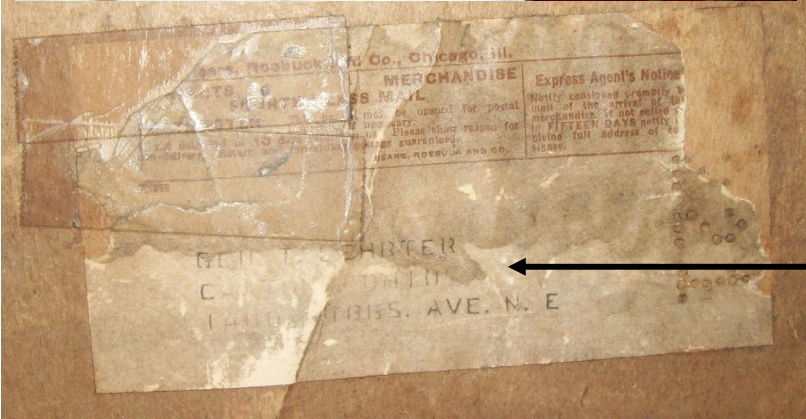
Now it would have been really interesting if this was a Sears set. I did find trains in a 1923 Sears catalog, but the only electric train was a Bing set. From what is available, this set is truly interesting and I hope to find out more about it from fellow members who might own one.

Dave McEntarfer comments:

Very interesting set, and likely made during the years of 1919-1920. An Ives box from that era was pretty flimsy and very few have survived, but would have probably had the 'American Toys' end label as they were big into promoting that group during that period. I don't have any Sears catalogs between 1910 and 1925, but Sears did list Ives trains in 1910 (although all mechanical or floor toys). In 1925 I believe Sears became an exclusive outlet for Lionel.



IVES 504 SET



BOX ADDRESS
 The box is fourth class mail from Sears Roebuck and Co. of Chicago, Ill. It is addressed to: Geo. T Lehrter, Canton, Ohio, 1400 (can't read) Ave.

THE IVES GRAY 17 INCH CARS

Compiled by Martin Fasack

I presented in an email to some of the most knowledgeable IVES collectors the 3243 pictures from the last publication of Tracks, and the ones from John Desantis that follow on page 6. What I love about this effort is the firestorm of knowledge that is ignited as the result of this simple email. The basic question was, we found a credible 3243 in gray, and did IVES make up 17 inch cars to support it? What developed was an analysis of the gray 17 inch cars produced by IVES, along with comments on the 3243 itself. Initially Randy Berger mentioned in an email some cars he actually held that were gray and later repainted by their owner.

Dave McEntarfer:

Actually I believe the gray cars that Randy referred to were 1928 versions with the window panes. The only reference to the gray cars in the 1928 catalog was in the back where the cars were listed for separate sale. Also I believe the cars that Randy refers to were 187-188-189 cars which in 1928 only came with the 3237. If they'd have come with a 3243, they would have been 180 series cars. Besides if they did put a 3243 in front of those cars the locomotive would have a wide motor. Just saying!

Martin Fasack:

Let's forget 1928 and concentrate on 1927. The Bankers special did use 187, 189 cars with a 3243 in 1927. Yes! You are right only separate sale cars are offered in 1927 in the color gray. They do delineate between gray and blue for the cars that are going with the 3237 in 1927. I don't know if these cars were ever made, but they did show them for separate sale through 1928.

Dave McEntarfer:

I believe the gray set of cars that Randy referred to is the set that Karl Rammling had and restored, that set is actually pictured on page 76 of the Greenberg book, it's also the set on the cover. I don't know if the engine was with the set originally or not, but the engine is a 3245 shortcab with brass doors on the ends and side (late?). If these cars were also with a 3243 it would have had window panes and a wide motor.

Clem Clement:

Wow; interesting, I always assumed there were gray 3243's out there. In Greenberg's IVES book, on page 77 under 1928, 188 Parlor car, you see a gray car identified by me. I insisted that it be entered in the book. The other entries about long gray cars I know nothing about. Many years ago at York I saw some long gray IVES cars, at least two in the set and perhaps three. I had been looking for long gray cars and at the time did not know if they existed or not. These cars were badly flaking. There was no primer or different color under the gray. I inspected the cars and I passed on the cars and went on down the isles. Several isles later I decided I should go back and buy the cars. (They were not cheap). The cars passed me under the arm of their new owner. I was heart broken at my stupidity. I have never seen another long gray car. For the 3242 gray set, I searched for years to find a set that was not flaking. One pre-York, I found a set on the grassy slope in front of the Billy Bud Motel. It took all the cash I had saved up for the entire York event that year but I'm so glad I wisely invested. I think I have a separate gray engine somewhere.

Clem Clement.....continued

I have 3 sets of those cars: cadet blue with a 3237R in cadet blue. Cars pictured on page 75 are mine. 4 wheel long trucks. Loco is on page 53. Another set is in medium green with a matching green 3237R, with four wheel long trucks. The third set is in light green with a 3243R and six wheel trucks. It has been too long for me to remember what platform was on the gray long cars. My guess is the IVES platform as I would have keyed on the Lionel one. I can say that the medium green 3241 brass plate that I have is the same medium green at the above 3237 and long cars. It is in high gloss with the paint inside the cab in dull green. It has brass handrails like a 3242.

Martin Fasack

If these are the cars, they are 1928, and if they were originally gray, they were sold as a separate sale item as shown in the 1928 catalog on page 24. Since no set was involved I would guess that a 3245 would make a nice set but that is only speculation. Gray cars are also listed in the 1927 catalog on page 33. They are also separate sale items and therefore no loco is identified to go with them. From the catalog I'm not even sure how one would order a locomotive to go with them. Since the gray paint gun was loaded for action in 1926, my guess is these 1927 cars slated for separate sale were some left over samples from 1926 that they decided not to sell in a cataloged set. Therefore, did they also paint up a few samples of 3243's, along with 3235R's? What I am saying is they did not need any passenger cars to be used as an excuse to paint up some sample locomotives. This is exemplified with the Kelly Green 3241, the State Brown 3242, the plated Olive Green 3241, the Black 3236R, and the Reddish Brown 3235. No Cars, just engines! Clem and Randy: Do you remember the cars you saw if they had an IVES or Lionel platform observation railing?

Randy Berger:

Memory says that both sets of gray cars had Lionel observation platforms. However, I am not positive that these were two different sets. Harry O may have sold that set and I saw the same set twice. Harry O was very proud of that gray set.

Dave McEntarfer:

Actually the 1928 pricelist I have (which lists specific colors for everything) does not list the cars in gray, only light blue, light green and orange. Only the catalog lists the color gray, but that catalog page is also just a copy from the 1927 catalog. The 1928 pricelist also lists one set number that the catalog does not have? It is set #1048/1048R listed as a 3245 with 187,188,189 cars all in light blue. We do know the engine and the cars exist. Although I've never seen one I've heard through several reliable sources that there are 1928 style gray cars (187 etc). I have never seen nor had anyone tell me that they've seen a 1926 or 27 style long car in gray? We do know that the 1926/27 cars are found in cadet blue, which the catalog does not list? Is it possible that the gray in the catalog is actually someone's definition of gray? Apparently there are original 3243s in gray, but that engine has shown up in several un-cataloged colors. Don't have any answers, just questions? One other side note even though the 1928 catalog page showing the passenger cars for separate sale looks to be just a copy of the 1928 page, they did go to the effort to remove the note under the colors for the short cars (184,etc). The 1927 catalog listed the colors red, light green and buff. The page in the 1928 catalog was updated to the correct colors for that year?

Dave McEntarfer.....continued

The big question would be did the cars have window panes and AF air tanks? 1928 cars can be found with both an Ives observation platform and a Lionel observation platform, but the Ives Observation platform is quite different from the 1927 version. Looks almost like an 0 gauge observation. Also since we're questioning this, has anyone ever seen a 1928 Ives passenger set with 180-181-182 cars in it? The catalog shows and lists the "Deluxe Special" as coming with 180-81-82 series passenger cars, but the pricelist lists it with 187 series cars. They are not listed for separate sale and Doc Robbie did not have any pictures of any cars with window panes, air tanks and a 180 number with 6 wheel trucks? The Greenberg book does list such a set in Orange and attributes it to Bernie Kuehne? I cataloged Bernie's stuff for Bertoia when it went to auction and there was no such set there?

Clem Clement:

In the late 70's I was stationed at Hanscom AFB in the Boston area. I got to many NETCA meets and got to know Dr. Jim Storer, past President of TCA, and many other TCA'rs. Jim spoke on several occasions about a covey of 3243's that came out of an attic in New England. Seems this person was a store owner who sold IVES trains. He like the big 3243 and saved one of each color he received from the factory. The total was 7 different colors. I don't remember all the colors Jim listed, but all black was one of those colors. Perhaps Jim can recall all the colors.

Randy Berger:

The gray cars that Harry O had at York were definitely 1928 cars with brass windows, AF air tanks and a Lionel observation platform. The gray cars I saw in Maryland that Rammling got were 1928 cars with brass windows, AF air tanks and Lionel observation platform. The 3245 shortcab with them was a repro. They were all repainted by KR. LATE 1928. I doubt that any legit gray 3243 exists - want to see it firsthand to believe it.

Martin Fasack:

Randy;. IVES made a lot of strange color engines as seen on the CD, without any cars to go with them. This could be just that. Don't know! In the June newsletter I will send it to all the members

for their comments. It could be they never made any cars, but did paint up a few color sample 3243's like the 3235 in gray. Again, don't know! The people that would definitely know are dead. What we do know is the 3243 shown in the June 2011 issue of Tracks was originally a 1926 red engine that was repainted in gray, with 1926 gray paint, and is on a 1926 3243 frame. It all matches.....

John Desantis:

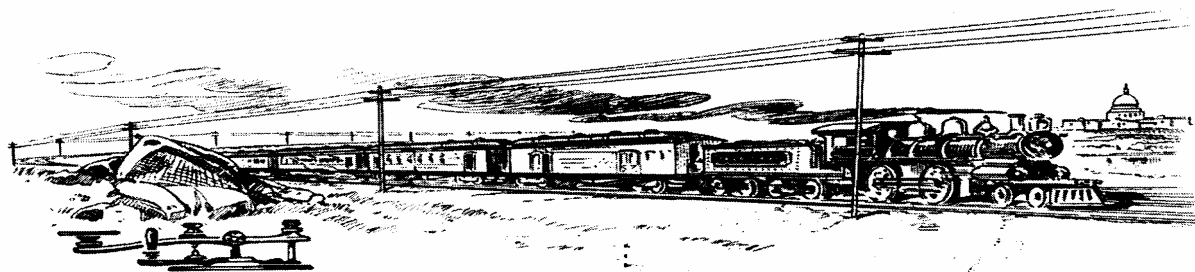
Sorry for being Johnny-come-lately on this topic - we begin Show move-in tomorrow and it's "that time of year". Thought I should do my part to further muddy the waters. I continue to believe that just about anything is possible from IVES, and to an equal degree from American Flyer. In the case of oddball paint colors, there are plenty of undisputed genuine "one-off" pieces. And, as with a gray 3243, when all they had to do was grab an already-painted-gray 3242 shell and slap it on a 3243 frame ("Hey Jerry, grab me some 3243 plates for this thing."), the odds of authentic oddballs leaving the factory skyrocket. Maybe somebody in management wanted to see how it would look. Maybe somebody on the line wanted to take one home. Maybe a dealer or some kid in a letter asked for a gray one. How did Doc Robbie's dark green Lionel 431 Diner come to be? A teenage boy walked in and asked them to make one for him. And there we're talking about Lionel - where regimented product standards and rigid quality control actually meant something! Less likely, but still worth considering: Even when examples turn up with markings or scratches that indicate clear tampering, what's to say that the tampering didn't take place at the factory? All of the Big Three did factory repaints - sometimes with far less care than a modern forger would take. Same scenario as above: "Hey Jerry, I can't find any gray 3242 shells without plates. toss me that screwdriver and pliers." I'll be attaching (in several emails) a few photos (see below) - without further editorial comment. The paint on both pieces is authentic, and it black lights exactly alongside other genuine IVES gray pieces. The 3243 loco has no other color beneath the gray. The 186 observation car has red beneath the gray, and is from the gray rubberstamped set with brass plated gray 3242 that surfaced 8 or 10 years back. All three cars are gray over red and rubberstamped; the engine is a "regular" gray 3242. Society member comment would be most appreciated.



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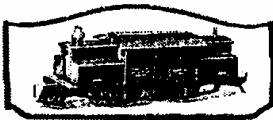


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