

Builder photo of end view of Norfolk & Western HC-3 covered hopper. Note the difference in bays, the HC-3 has four bays instead of three. Photos from the collection of Lee Webb - Roy Hurlburt

NORFOLK & WESTERN HC-1 AND HC-2 COVERED HOPPERS

by Jim Kindraka

At the conclusion of the earlier article on Pennsylvania Railroad's unique series of H30/H30a and H32 covered hoppers, I mentioned that the Norfolk and Western (N & W) was reported to have a series of identical cars. In that article the N & W cars were identified as class HC-1 #20710-20769.

My request for further information on these cars was answered by S scaler Billy Wade in Florida. The data he provided was via a product review from the N & W Historical Society. The information in my original **DISPATCH** article proved partially correct and partially in error. The N & W had 2 classes of these covered hoppers — a total of 60 cars. The car numbers originally listed are not correct. The correct N & W classes and numbers assigned are as follows:

Class HC-1 #70210-70219

Class HC-2 #70160-70209

A photo of class HC-1 #70210 was also provided. The car is identical to the PRR H30 design. It employs the same flat sheet roof, hatches, and non-see-thru roof walk as the H30. All other dimensions of the car are identical.

Both the HC-1 and HC-2 class covered hoppers were painted light gray, including the underbody. The trucks were painted black — or actually left unpainted. Unpainted, the trucks would appear rusty and weathered black in a short period of time. Lettering was in black. From the left end of the car the 2 triangular panels were blank and the first of the rectangular panels contained the reporting marks and number. The next 3 rectangular panels contained the large block "N & W" with the smaller

words "Norfolk and Western" above. The two right end triangular panels were also blank. This is virtually identical lettering to N & W open coal hoppers except hoppers were black with white lettering. I am not aware of any correct lettering available today in S scale.

No information was provided on the use of the cars by the N & W. One can only assume that many of the uses were identical to the Pennsy's. These cars did not use the loading instruction plate developed by the PRR. Since the N & W was such a large coal hauler, a potential use for the cars would have been in hauling pulverized coal to customers requiring it. This coal would not lend itself to open hoppers — it would blow away! Given the volume of coal the N & W hauled, it's pretty safe to assume they did a fair business in this type commodity.

The question may develop as to why unique design. Actually the association of the two railroads is quite deep. At the time these cars were being built, the PRR owned just over 1/3 of N & W's common stock. The N & W undoubtedly opted for a tested and "in use" design from their 1/3 owner rather than begin their own design and development work.

Interestingly enough, this association extended to some motive power areas too. In October 1941 N & W 'A' 2-6-6-4 #1208 tested between Pennsy's Ft. Wayne division and Harrisburg, PA. The tests were not very successful owing to poor coal but, data was used in the development of Pennsy's Q2 4-6-4-4 which made its appearance the following year. During the war, the N & W lent 6 of their

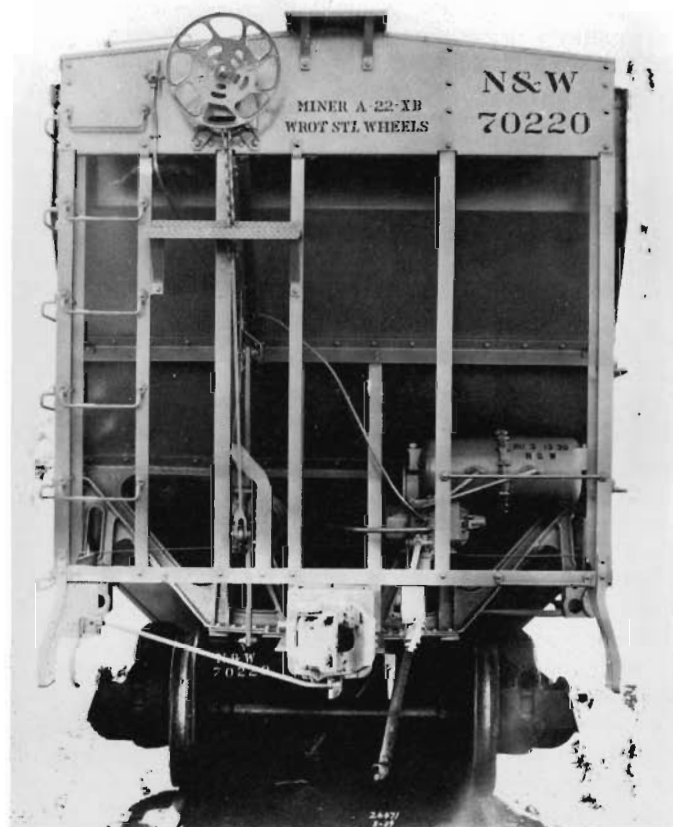
Y-3 mallets to the PRR to help hauling wartime traffic and in December 1944 the Pennsy "borrowed" N & W 'J' 4-8-4 #610 for passenger train tests. Unfortunately the N & W did not provide the correct clearance diagram for #610 and the locomotive knocked off part of the concrete station platform the first time it arrived at Chicago Union Station!

After the war, between March and September 1948, locomotives passed in the opposite direction with Pennsy T1's and Q2's testing on the N & W for passenger and freight service respectively. Management at the PRR, still a 1/3rd owner, "suggested" the N & W test their engines. The not-so-veiled purpose was for the steam committed N & W to purchase the Pennsy locomotives and free the PRR to pursue its move to diesels. In any case, the N & W people were unimpressed with the Pennsy engines during testing and returned them with a polite "thanks but no thanks".

Pennsy's ownership interests in the N & W ended in 1964. The ICC ordered that the stock be sold as a condition of both the N & W/NKP, WABASH and PRR/NYC mergers. Anyway, I thought some of you might wonder how Pennsylvania RR designed and built cars would ever end up on the Norfolk and Western.

One final correction to the original article involves the paint color used on the Pennsy covered hoppers. The white lettered cars were not painted tuscan but were red oxide. This is kind of a bright rust color. I do not believe anyone makes the exact color but perhaps someone can provide a mixing recipe.

Special thanks to the N&W Historical Society, P.O. Box 1218, Roanoke, VA 24006.



End view of Norfolk & Western HC-3 covered hopper. The lettering is the same as the HC-1 and HC-2.