



## Prototype Data Sheet #18C Great Northern Wood Sheathed 1937 Design Boxcars



ACF, Courtesy Ed Hawkins

From 1937 through 1942, the Great Northern acquired 8000 boxcars that followed the A.A.R.'s 1937 design, but with the unique feature of vertical tongue in groove outside sheathing. This wood exterior changed the appearance of the cars so dramatically that it gave the impression of a design all its own. The large number of wood sheathed '37 design cars--over a third of G.N.'s 40' boxcar total in 1941--made them a trademark of the road, widely seen throughout the U.S. and Canada.

The reason for using wood sheathing on a car of otherwise all steel design lies, at least according to recollection, in the need of the road to appease the lumber interests of the Pacific Northwest. The G.N. was a big shipper of wood products

from the vast forests of the region. Since few industrial products moved from west to east, these shipments of raw materials were a major portion of the loads originated on the G.N.

The G.N.'s own version of the A.A.R. 1937 boxcar employed most of the standard design elements from the A.A.R. drawings, such as 4/5 Dreadnaught ends and paneled steel roof. The car had the nearly universal 3712 cubic foot interior and 10' inside height. The underframe was largely that of the A.A.R. design also, except for the use of a solid side sill. Since the car used wood sheathing, "Z" bracing--in the form of a Pratt truss--was required under the wood side



ACF, Courtesy Ed Hawkins



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Some roads--notably the Southern Pacific and B&O--retained the '37 height while accepting the new end stampings, however. In fact, they retained the lower height past 1948 when the new diagonal paneled roof was introduced.

While the 1932 A.R.A. design created the first standard steel boxcar, it was the '37 design which popularized the idea. Since the '37 design preceded the rebound of the economy during World War II by only a couple years, it was the '37 car which was the most widely seen. (A fine HO injection molded kit of this car is available from Jerry Porter's IMWX.) The railroads built a number of distinctive variations of the '37 car during the prewar years. The Great Northern's 45000-52999

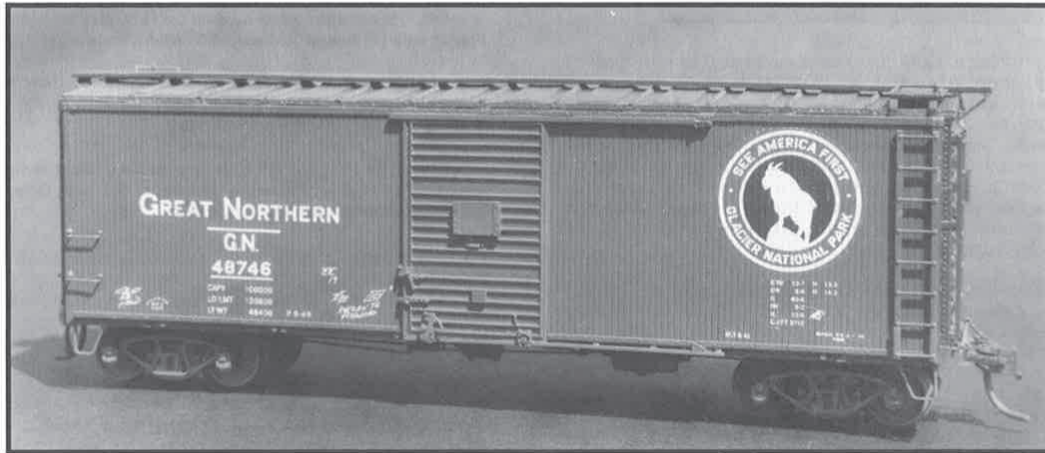
series of cars was the most numerous, if not the most radical departure from the standard design although it retained the basic ingredients of the A.A.R. '37 car. Along with the C&O Deco and Erie Buckeye end cars with Viking roofs and the Burlington's outside braced cars, the G.N. cars were some of the most unique variations.

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Howard Ameling



Paul Dunn. Rich Buzs Coll.. Circa 1958