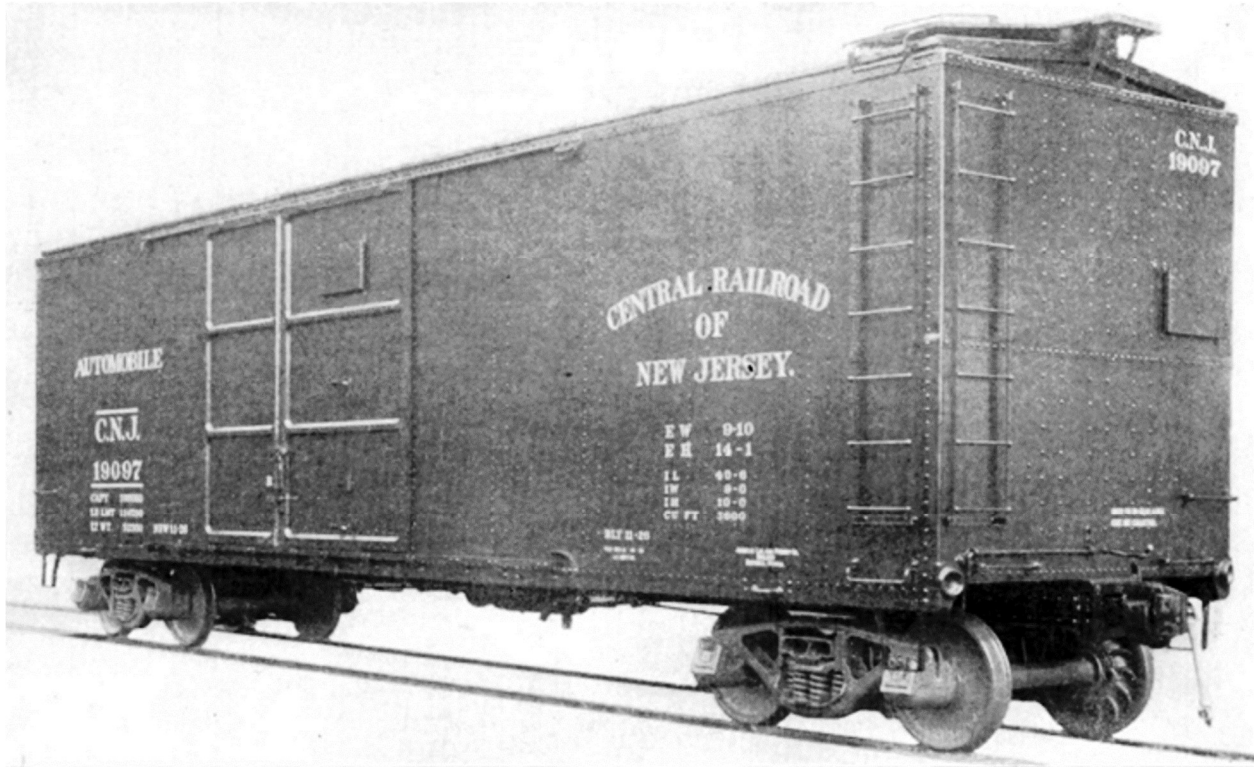


CNJ 1923 ARA design 1 ½ door Automobile Car



CNJ 19097 ACF builders photo December 1926. Ray Breyer collection.

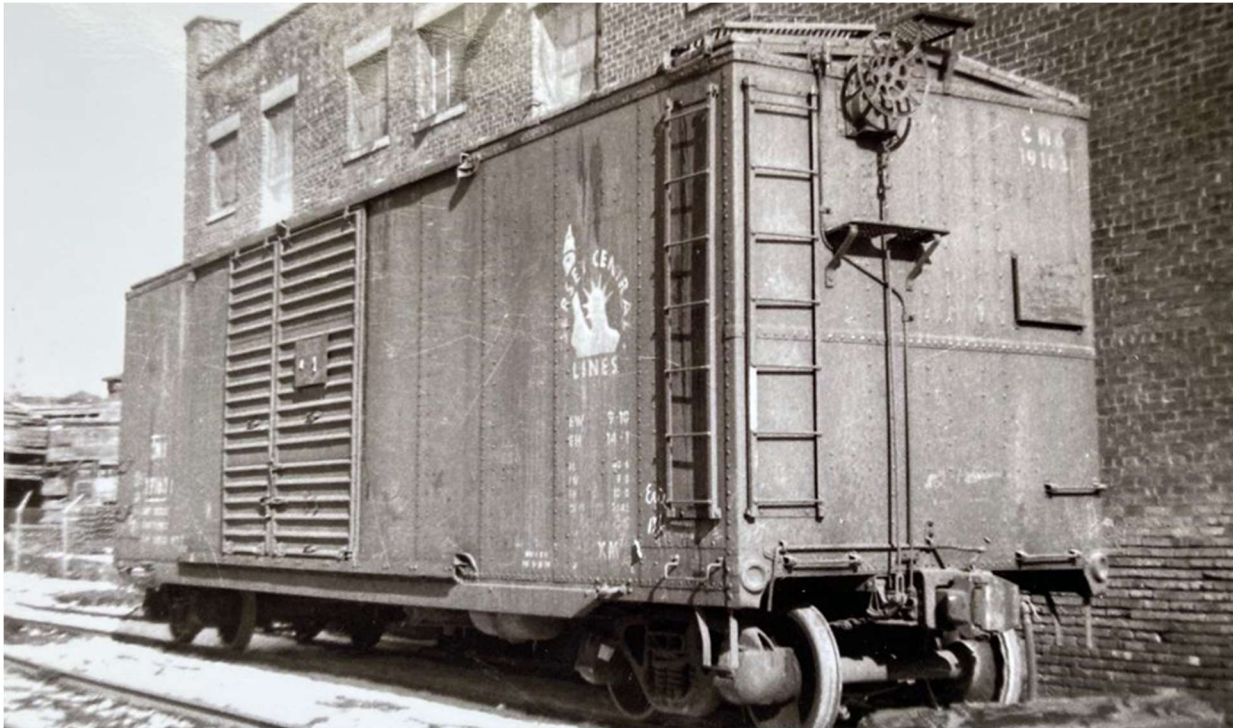
Following the lead of most of its competitor railroads, the Central Railroad of New Jersey (CNJ) began buying groups of all steel cars during the 1920s. The purpose was two-fold: to replace the outdated wooden cars that were being retired and to expand their fleet to accommodate the increased industrial traffic of the period. One of those groups consisted of 200 (numbered 19000-19199) cars built by AC&F in 1926 with a 10' inside height and a 10' door opening. These cars were for automobile loading and classified XA. The cars were originally equipped with plate steel ends, 1 ½ Creco three-panel steel doors, Hutchins Dry Lading steel roofs, wood running boards, 7-rung ladders, Ajax hand brakes, Dalman two level trucks (some with Scullin side frames and some with ACF standard side frames), and KC-schedule air brakes. The car's dimensions of 40' 6" inside length, 9' 0" inside width, and the aforementioned 10' 0" inside height created a capacity of 3,645 cubic feet. The trucks were rated at 100,000 pounds. The cars were initially painted the CNJ's version of boxcar red with white lettering.

From their build through the beginning of WW II, the cars retained their XA designation and 200 were still listed in revenue service in the July 1942 ORER. The cars were given AB brake systems sometime during the 1940s and many cars had one, if not both, of their doors replaced with Youngstown style ones. By the end of the war, however, the cars had been reclassified as normal box cars (XM). The railroad logo of "Jersey Central Lines" with the Statue of Liberty emblem was adopted in 1944.

During the 1940s the CNJ attempted to avoid certain New Jersey taxes on its Pennsylvania lines. The Easton and Western Railroad, a short branch west of Easton, Pennsylvania, was renamed to

the Central Railroad of Pennsylvania (CRP) in 1944 and all Pennsylvania leases were transferred to it in 1946. This new CRP company began operations August 5, 1946. Per the October 1946 ORER, 42 of the 200 cars now carried Central Railroad of Pennsylvania reporting marks, yet still retaining their original numbers. The arrangement was struck down by the courts and, in 1952, CRP operations were merged back into the CNJ.

By January of 1954, the ORER report listed both CNJ and CRP in one list, so it is not possible to determine how many cars were still carrying the CRP reporting marks. However, there were still 195 of these cars listed in revenue service at that time. Four of those were listed as exceptions and noted to be “single door cars” – numbers 19023, 19099, 19126, and 19151 – even though the door opening was still listed at 10’ 0”.



CNJ 19163. Bob's Photo. Unknown date and photographer. Courtesy of Bill Welch.

The July 1961 ORER lists 157 cars still in revenue service. Again, there are exceptions noted, with 50 cars being noted as single door cars and now having a 6' door opening. Within the list of those 50 cars, the original four car numbers are still noted. As the photo below of 19023 suggests, it would appear that this was accomplished by sealing the half-door closed.

Many of the cars also received Morton steel running boards at some point during the 1950s. Also, the cars had side sill reinforcements retrofitted along the side sills below the doors. Some of these running from bolster to bolster, others only below the door opening. The cars were very long lived with 3 cars still listed in revenue service in the July of 1965 ORER.



CNJ 19023 circa early 1960s. Note lined out number indicating no longer in revenue service, and original half door.



CNJ 19029 circa 1955. Courtesy of Bill Welch. Location unknown.



CNJ 19025 circa 1952. Photographer and location unknown