

# BOSTON & MAINE DINING CARS

## PART 1: THE WOODEN ERA

by Leroy C. Hutchinson

Would you believe there are two former wood diners still active on the Boston & Maine? Of course, they are not dining cars today. They are used as riding cars on the East Deerfield and Mechanicville wreck trains.

In this day when the Boston & Maine doesn't own a single passenger car, you can still imagine from looking at these two cars how it was "back then," when this country's pace was a slower and more leisurely one. Those days of wooden, steel underframe passenger equipment and steam locomotives were a time when traveling by train was both an exciting experience and an adventure.

During this wooden era the Pullman Car Company built six dining-cafe cars, numbered 1094-1099 in 1906; six full dining cars, numbered 1088-1093 in 1907; and the Boston & Maine converted two Pullman coaches built in 1903 to cafe-coaches, numbered 2490 and 2491. In 1942, a wood and steel parlor-buffet car was purchased from the Delaware & Hudson Railroad. This car, D&H 163, was numbered B&M 95 and named *Mountaineer*. This was the first of two dining cars to carry that name. The second *Mountaineer* will be dealt with in Part 2 of this article, the steel era.

Return with us now to yesteryear, to the afternoon of May 15, 1926. The occasion is the

maiden trip of the Boston & Maine's new crack flyer, the *Minute Man*, westbound for Chicago. The Pullmans will go on to Chicago on the New York Central's *Lake Shore Limited*, the diner and coaches running only as far as Troy, New York. Up front we see a proud Pacific-type locomotive, number 3667. A dark blue sign with "The Minute Man" in white letters adorns the pilot. Immediately behind the tender is the Pullman-club-buffet-baggage car *Appalachia*, Pullman sleepers *McAlpin*, *Irving*, and *Amaranth*, then wood diner 1092, with steel coaches 4504, 4014 and 4511 bringing up the markers.

Since this article pertains to dining cars, let's go aboard the 1092. This car is one in an order of six diners, numbered 1088-1093, built by Pullman in 1907. Each car seats 30 guests. As we enter, after passing a heater, refrigerator and closets, we notice tables for four on our right and tables for two on our left, the crisp white linen tablecloths and napkins, the polished silver, the china with Minute Man design and flowers at every table. The Minute Man design on the china is from Daniel Chester French's Minute Man statue at Concord, Mass. At the end of the dining room, against the pantry wall, is a sideboard, highly veneered, containing silverware. Bearing to the

right we pass along a passageway beside the kitchen, ending at the opposite vestibule from where we entered.

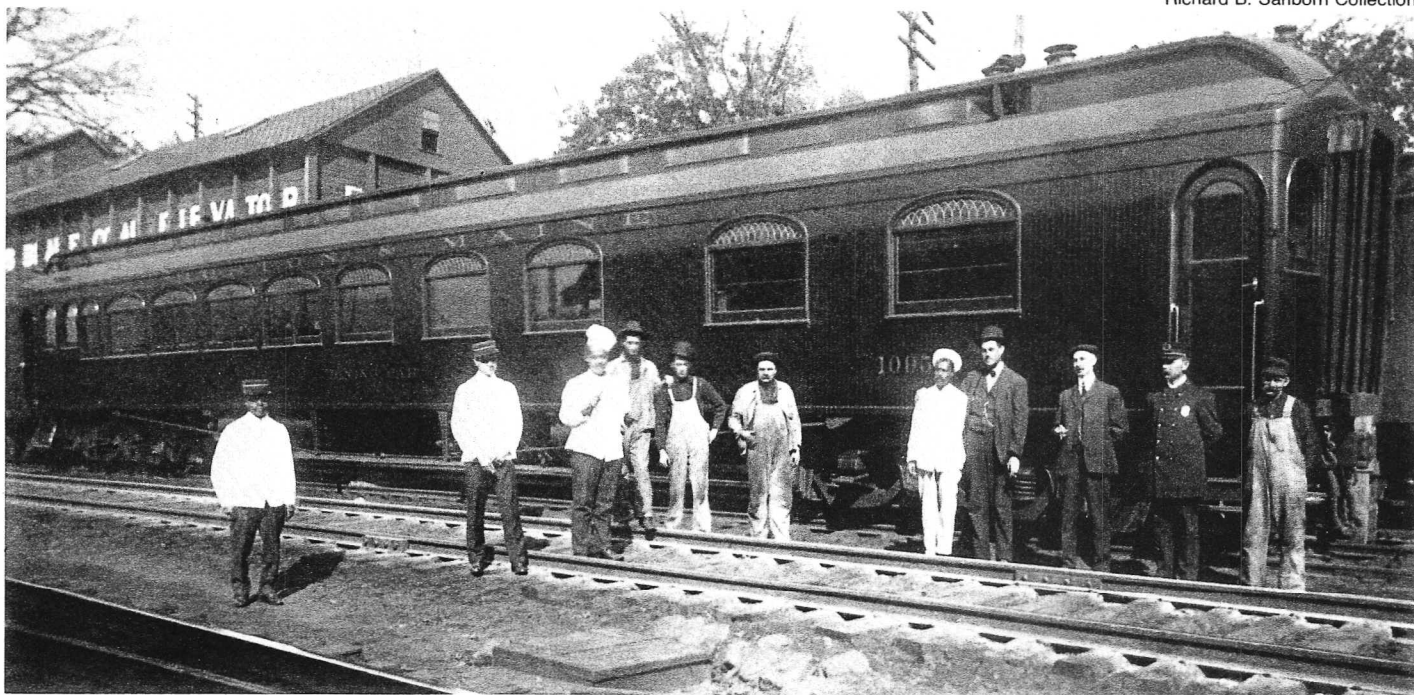
Back outside on the platform we have an opportunity to examine the exterior of 1092. It rides on six-wheel iron and wood trucks. There are vestibules with arch windows at each end of the car. It is a wood-sheathed car with steel underframe and leaded glass arch windows along its sides. The car is painted the standard coach green, showing "Boston & Maine" on the letterboards, with "Dining Car 1092" underneath the windows at the center of the car.

These wooden diners worked the best B&M trains until the first all-steel diners (the "State" class with colonial interiors) were delivered late in 1930. After that, they were relegated to the lesser trains, bowing out in the 1940s. They were famous for New England seafood dinners. The *Flying Yankee's* specialties were lamb chops, candied sweets and apple pie. One of these wood diners would work one end of the B&M-Central Vermont *Ambassador*. The Central Vermont had one diner, the steel sheathed No. 600, which would work opposite a B&M wood diner.

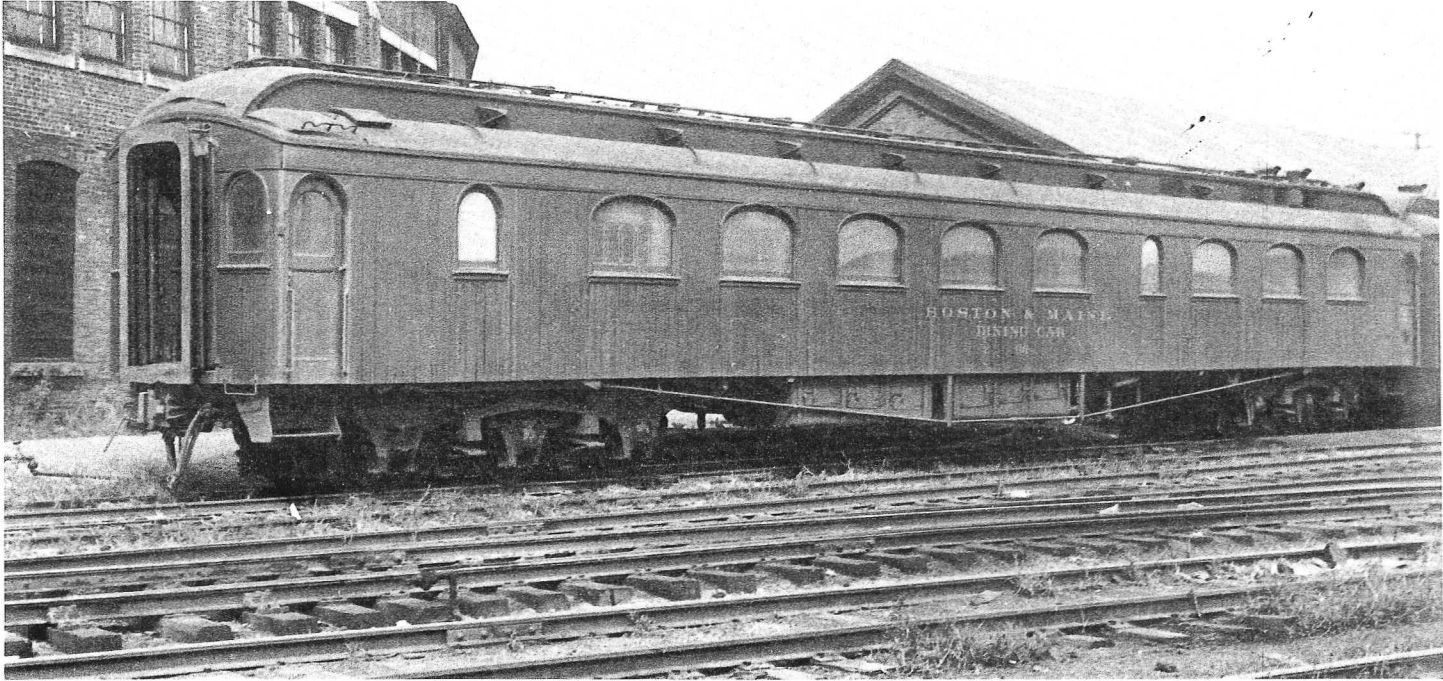
(see page 20)

Chef, waiters, and other assorted individuals pose in front of B&M dining car 1095 at Greenfield, Mass., about 1910.

Richard B. Sanborn Collection

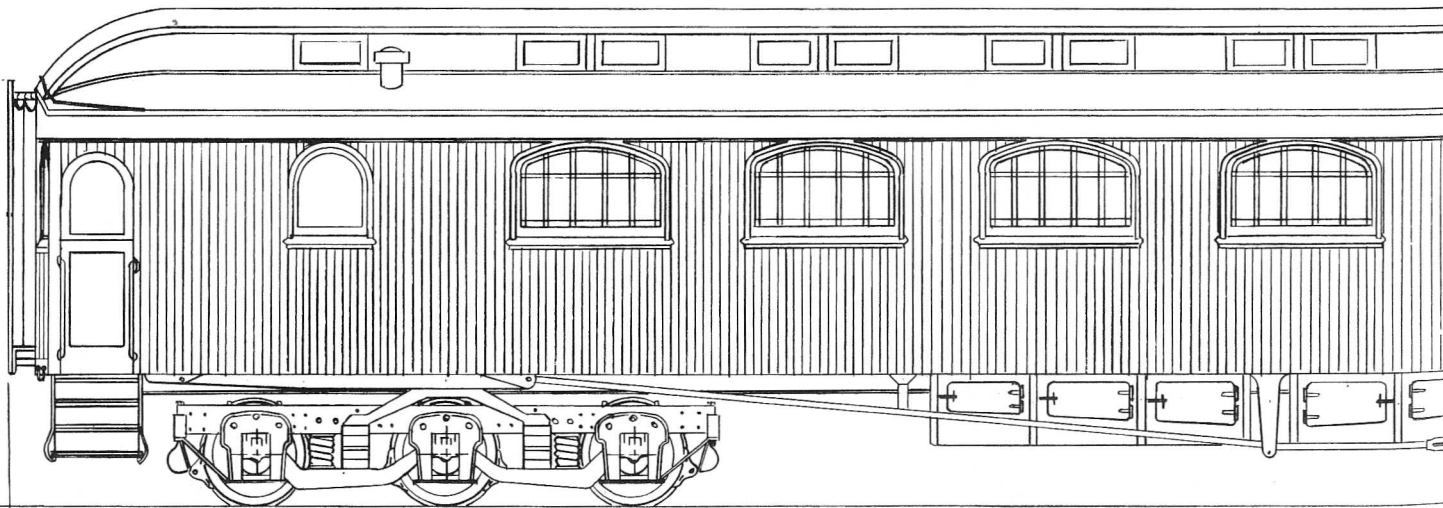


# BOSTON & MAINE WOODEN DINER



Laurence I. Beake

B&M diner 90, formerly 1090, at East Cambridge, Mass., in the 1940s.



80'

1088-1093

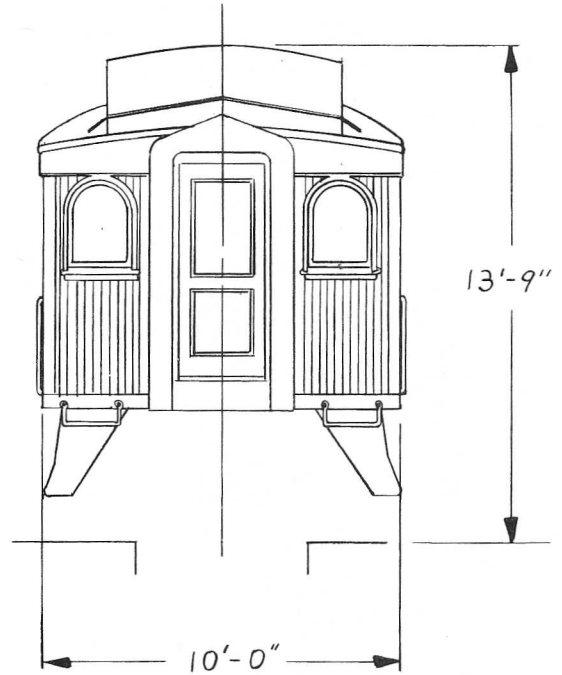
# PULLMAN 1907



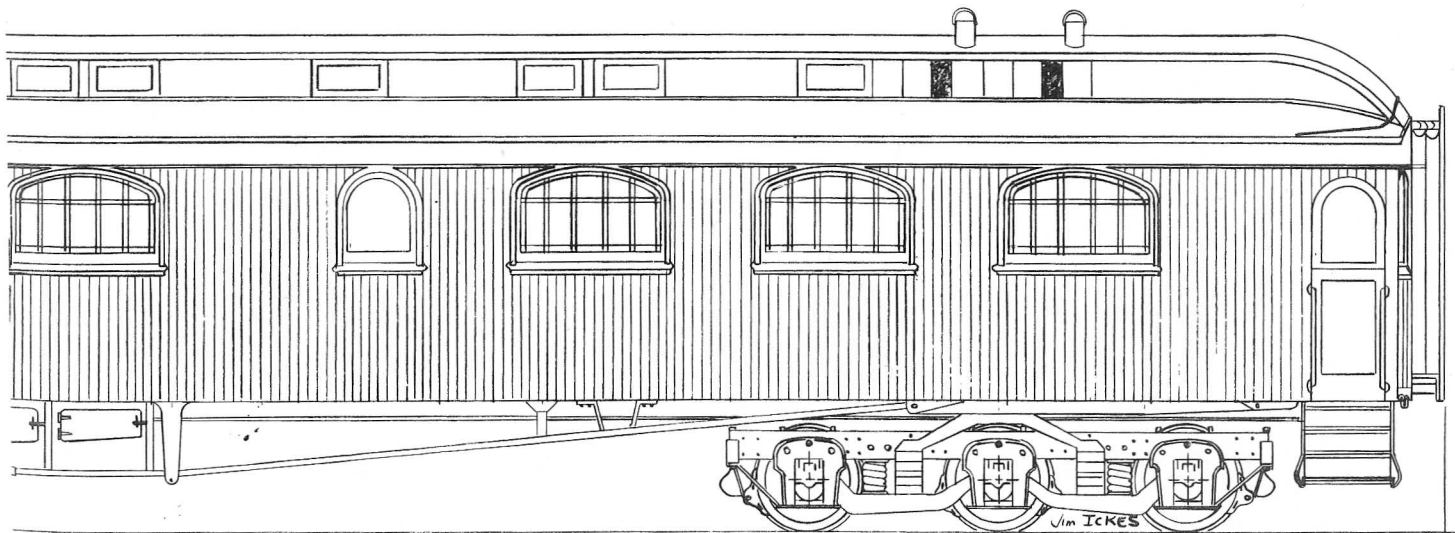
David K. Johnson

Boston & Maine champagne bucket from the collection of Robert F. Cowan contains the old "arrow" herald on its side.

Proportion 64:1  
S Scale 3/16" = 1 foot



Scale drawing by James T. Ickes based on a drawing  
by Walter Goddard, courtesy of Hollis Baird



5"



(Continued from Page 17)

The Maine Central had two wood diners, practically identical to the B&M's, numbered 1200 and 1201, built by Pullman at about the same time as the B&M's, for service between Portland and Bangor, Maine, on the *Bar Harbor Express*. It is possible that these MEC diners occasionally ran on the B&M. One of these MEC diners has survived as an antique shop in Kennebunk, Maine.

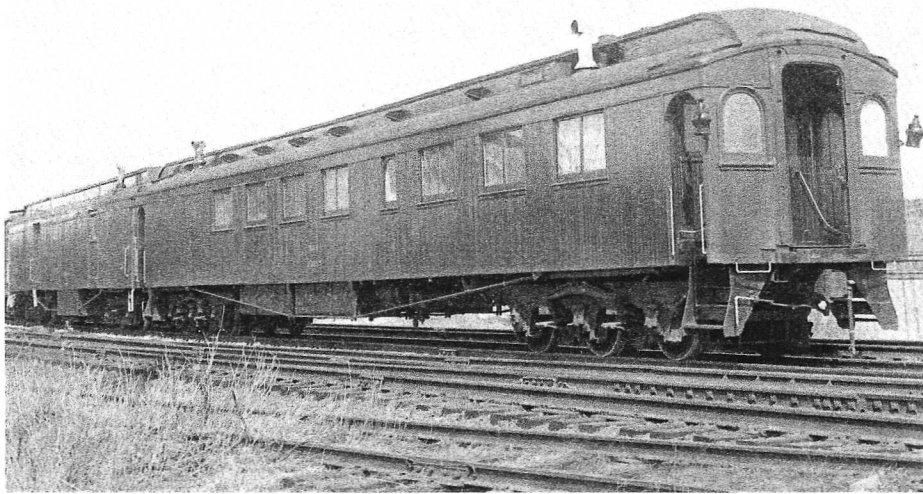
The six dining-passenger-cafe cars, numbered 1094-1099, had various seating configurations. The 1095 seated 28 cafe and 12 passengers; the 1099 seated 30 cafe and 36 passengers. The rest of the cars seated 24 cafe and 36 passengers. Assignments included, besides working along with the six aforementioned wood diners, working the *Green Mountain Flyer* from Boston. The Rutland Railroad had just one cafe-coach, No. 900, so the B&M supplied one of their cafe cars for this train on alternate days.

Two of these cars, 1096 and 1097, were converted at Billerica Shops into diner-lounge-observation cars during 1926-27. The 1097, named *Concord*, was put into service on the *Minute Man* on January 17, 1927, operating between Boston and Troy, N.Y., westbound one day and eastbound the next. The new service was placed on a daily basis on February 8, 1927, when the 1096 named *Lexington* was completed. The most notable change in the rebuilding of these two cars was the changing of the passenger section into a club-observation and women's lounge. The only other basic change made was at the vestibule end where one vestibule door was blocked off by the addition of a refrigerator in the kitchen end, and the steps were removed. This left a vestibule-blind end effect on the kitchen end of the cars. In the dining area there were six tables seating four persons each. The observation lounge seated sixteen. With the arrival of the all-steel "State" series diners, *Concord* and *Lexington* were relegated to the *Berkshire Flyer* between Boston and Troy, N.Y. As with the wood diners, the wood cafe cars were phased out in the early 1940s; some were relegated to work train service while the others were scrapped.

For Canadian service on the Montreal & Boston Line, two cafe coaches were converted from coaches built by the Pullman Car Company in 1903 and given numbers 2490 and 2491. Unlike the coach green diners and cafe cars, these two cafe coaches were painted in Canadian Pacific red with "Montreal & Boston Line" on the letterboards, and "Boston & Maine" and the car number in gold lettering beneath the windows.

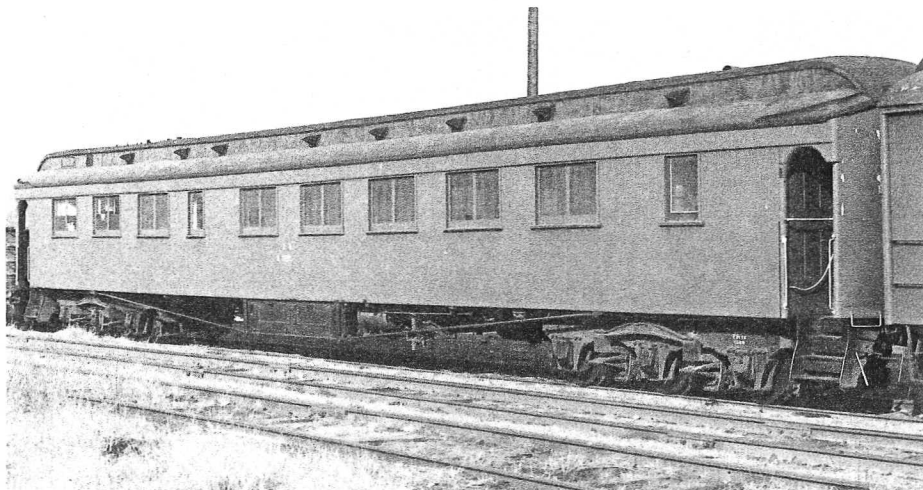
Car number 95, formerly Delaware & Hudson number 163, was sold to the B&M on December 9, 1942, renumbered 95 and named *Mountaineer*. There were 17 seats in the dining section and 14 in the passenger section. It ran on the *Ambassador* for about five years before being converted to work train service at Concord Shops in March 1948.

(See Page 22)

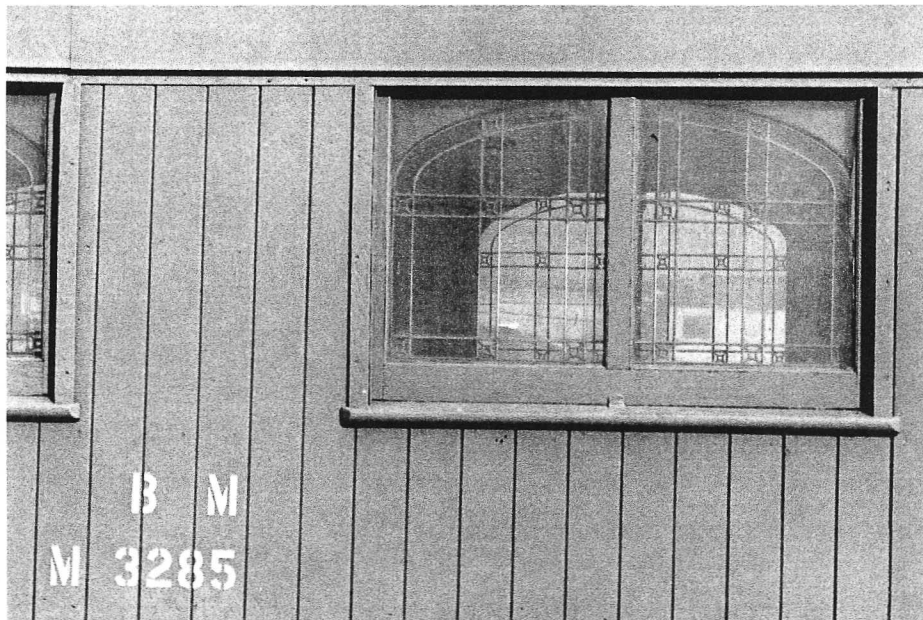


Russell F. Munroe, Jr.

Three views of M3285 in wreck train service: at North Chelmsford, Mass. (above) in March 1965, and in Mechanicville, N.Y. (two photos below), in November 1975, when it was a bunk and kitchen car assigned to the Mechanicville wreck train. New sheathing and "storm windows" hide the lines of the old leaded-glass arch windows.



Both, William R. Mischler



# B&M WOODEN DINERS

## Parlor-Buffer Car

Steel underframe, steel and wood body, built in 1932 by Delaware & Hudson, vestibule, weight 162,500, length 79'-8½", 6-wheel trucks, 5x9" journals, vapor heating.

- 95 Ex-D&H 163, sold to B&M 12/9/1942, named "Mountaineer," renumbered W3154 at Concord Shops 3/1948, destroyed at Billerica Shops 3/22/1956.

## Dining Cars — Pullman 1907

Steel underframe, wood sheathed, vestibule, weight 129,600, length over couplers 80'-7½", width over eaves 10'-1", extreme height 14'-6", 6-wheel iron and wood trucks, 5x9" journals, vapor heating, electric lighting.

- 1088 Renumbered 88 6/12/1931 at East Cambridge Shops, destroyed at Billerica Shops 4/18/1940.  
1089 Renumbered 89 11/10/1930 at East Cambridge Shops, destroyed at Billerica Shops 11/6/1941.  
1090 Renumbered 90 11/10/1930 at East Cambridge Shops, changed to wreck train riding car M3285 at Concord Shops 3/1948.  
1091 Renumbered 91 6/12/1931 at East Cambridge Shops, changed to work train car W3294 at Concord Shops 12/2/1942, destroyed at Billerica Shops 3/27/1953.  
1092 Renumbered 92 12/11/1933 at East Cambridge Shops, changed to work train car W3291 at Concord Shops 5/21/1942, destroyed at Billerica Shops 2/26/1954.  
1093 Renumbered 93 6/10/1932 at East Cambridge Shops, destroyed at Billerica Shops 4/16/1940.

## Dining-Passenger Cafe Cars — Pullman 1906

Steel underframe, wood sheathed, vestibule, weights 124,600 to 129,600, length over couplers 80'-7½", width over eaves 10'-1", extreme height 14'-3" to 14'-8", 6-wheel iron and wood trucks, 5x9" journals, vapor heating, electric lighting.

- 1094 Renumbered 94, changed to wreck train riding car M3288 at Concord Shops 2/6/1942.  
1095 Changed to air brake instruction car 2222 in 1926, destroyed at Billerica Shops 12/21/1950.  
1096 Renumbered 96, rebuilt 1926-27 to diner lounge observation car for "Minute Man," named "Lexington," changed to work train car W3231 at Concord Shops 12/1940, sold to M. Schiavone for scrap 5/22/1958.  
1097 Renumbered 97, rebuilt 1926-27 to diner lounge observation car for "Minute Man," named "Concord," changed to work train car W3239 at Concord Shops 12/31/1940, destroyed at Billerica Shops 12/20/1954.  
1098 Renumbered 98, destroyed at Billerica Shops 4/15/1940.  
1099 Renumbered 99, destroyed at Billerica Shops 4/22/1940.

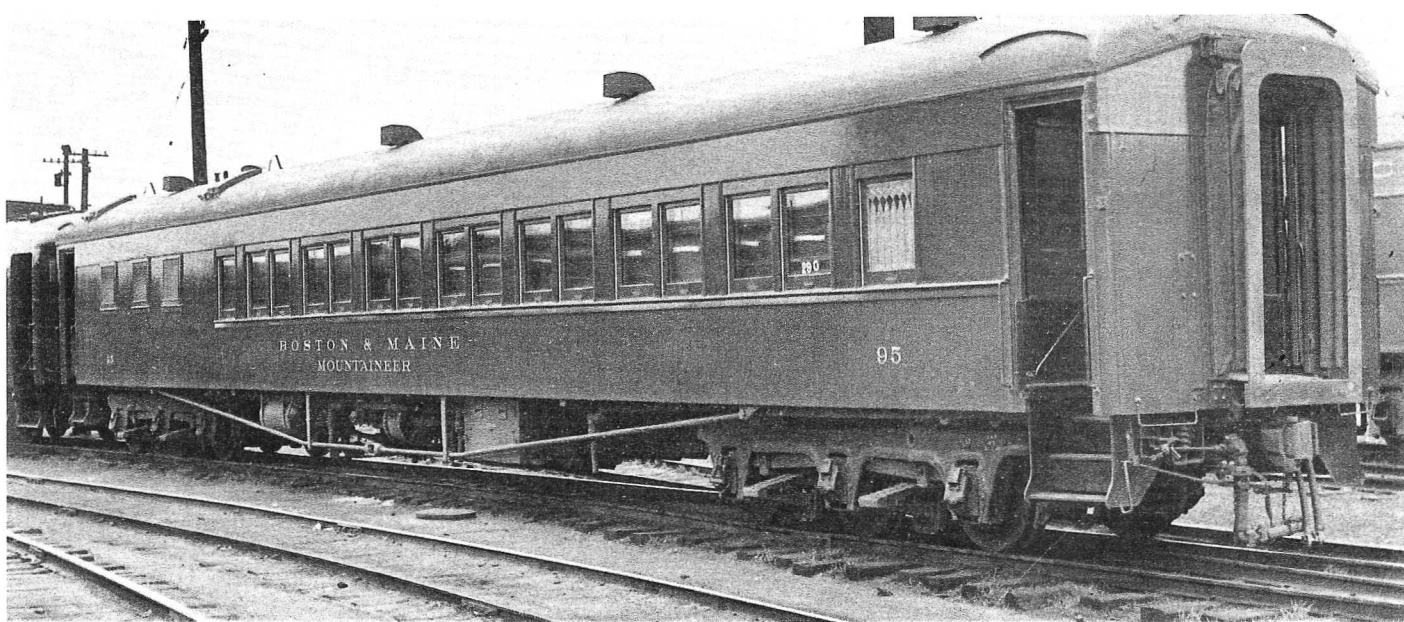
## Cafe Coaches

Wood underframe, wood sheathed, built by Pullman 1903 as coaches, vestibule, weight 107,800, length over sheathing 65'-0", width over sheathing 9'-10½", 6-wheel iron and wood trucks, 4½x8" journals, hot water heating, electric lighting, 40 seats in coach section, 12 in diner.

- 2490 Ex-B&M 504, changed to W3836, further disposition unknown.  
2491 Ex-B&M 505, returned to Canadian Pacific Railway 1927.

Note: Boston & Maine records do not indicate that these two cars were built for the Canadian Pacific Railway, the only notation being as shown above. This would indicate that they were CPR cars originally.

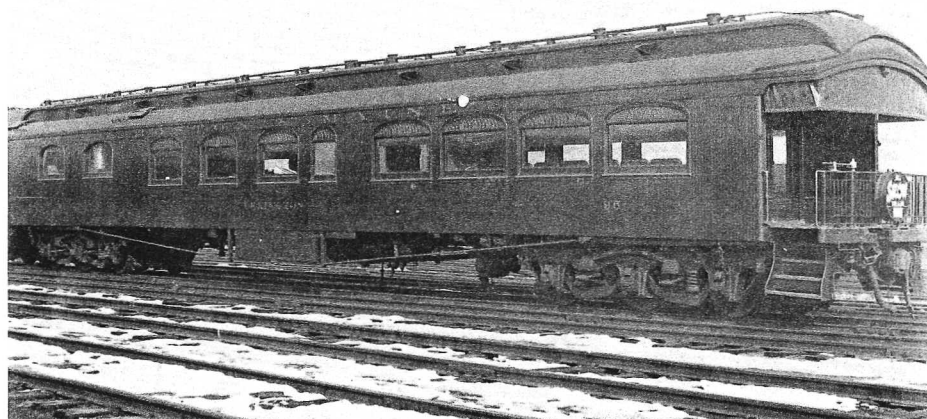
Work car numbers: W indicates Maintenance of Way Department  
M indicates Mechanical Department



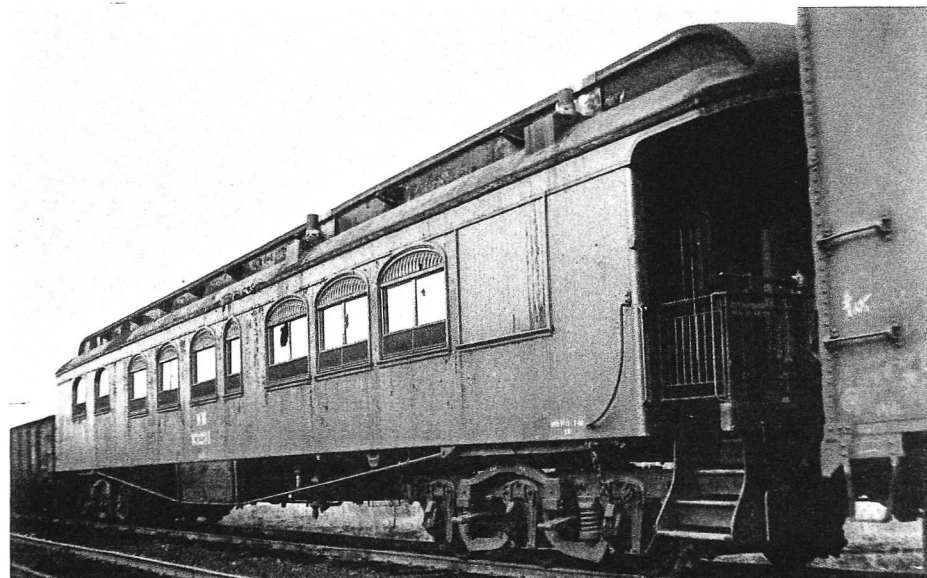
Laurence I. Beake

B&M wood diner 95, *Mountaineer* (above) in Yard 4, East Cambridge. Diner-lounge-observation car 96, *Lexington* (middle) at the tail end of a Snow Train in Boston. The same car (bottom) was near the end of its career as work car W3231 when photographed at Concord, N.H., in November 1957. (Opposite page, top) M3288 in work service at Orange, Mass., in 1964. The vestibule of the same car (opposite page, below) still retains some of its original charm in this 1975 view.

Sid Towle



T.H. Hoisington



(Continued from Page 20)

The two remaining veterans are former diner 1090 and former cafe car 1094. The 1090 was renumbered to 90 and then became M3285, a riding car on the Mechanicville wreck train. Number 1094 was renumbered to 94 and then became M3288, a riding car on the East Deerfield wreck train.

Both cars still ride on six-wheel trucks, but the iron and wood has been replaced with steel. On M3285, square "storm" windows have been placed over the old leaded-glass arch windows which are still visible underneath. New wood sheathing has been placed over the old. One end of the car still has its original arch windows in the vestibule, while the other end of the car is steel sheathed with no end windows. The M3288 retains more of its original look, although a few of the arch windows have been "squared" off and a couple blocked off and sheathed over. Diaphragms on both cars have been removed. As to the interiors, perhaps some B&M employees who have worked on wreck trains can better enlighten us.

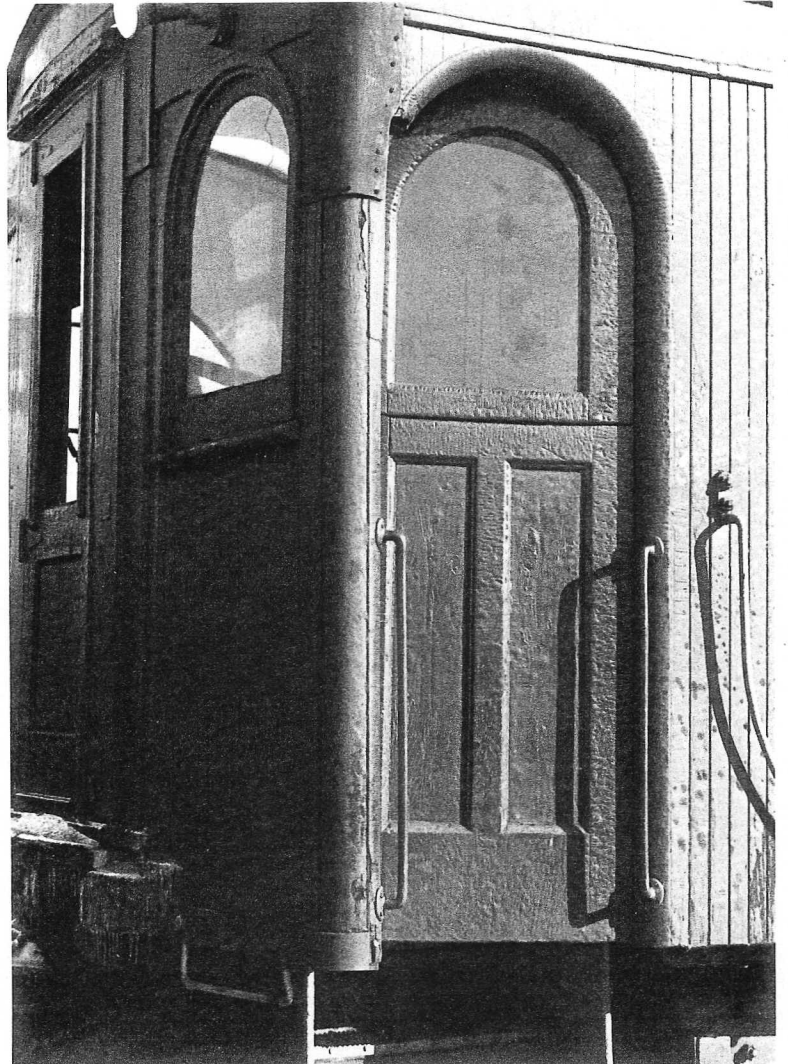
It's a nostalgic sight to see these two veterans from another era still intact today. Wouldn't it be great if, when their usefulness on the Boston & Maine were served, someone would preserve and restore them to their former glory? Back to the days of crisp linen tablecloths and napkins, silver, china and flowers at every table. Sound far fetched? Not really. But only time and the realization of an historian's dream will tell.





Russell F. Munroe, Jr.

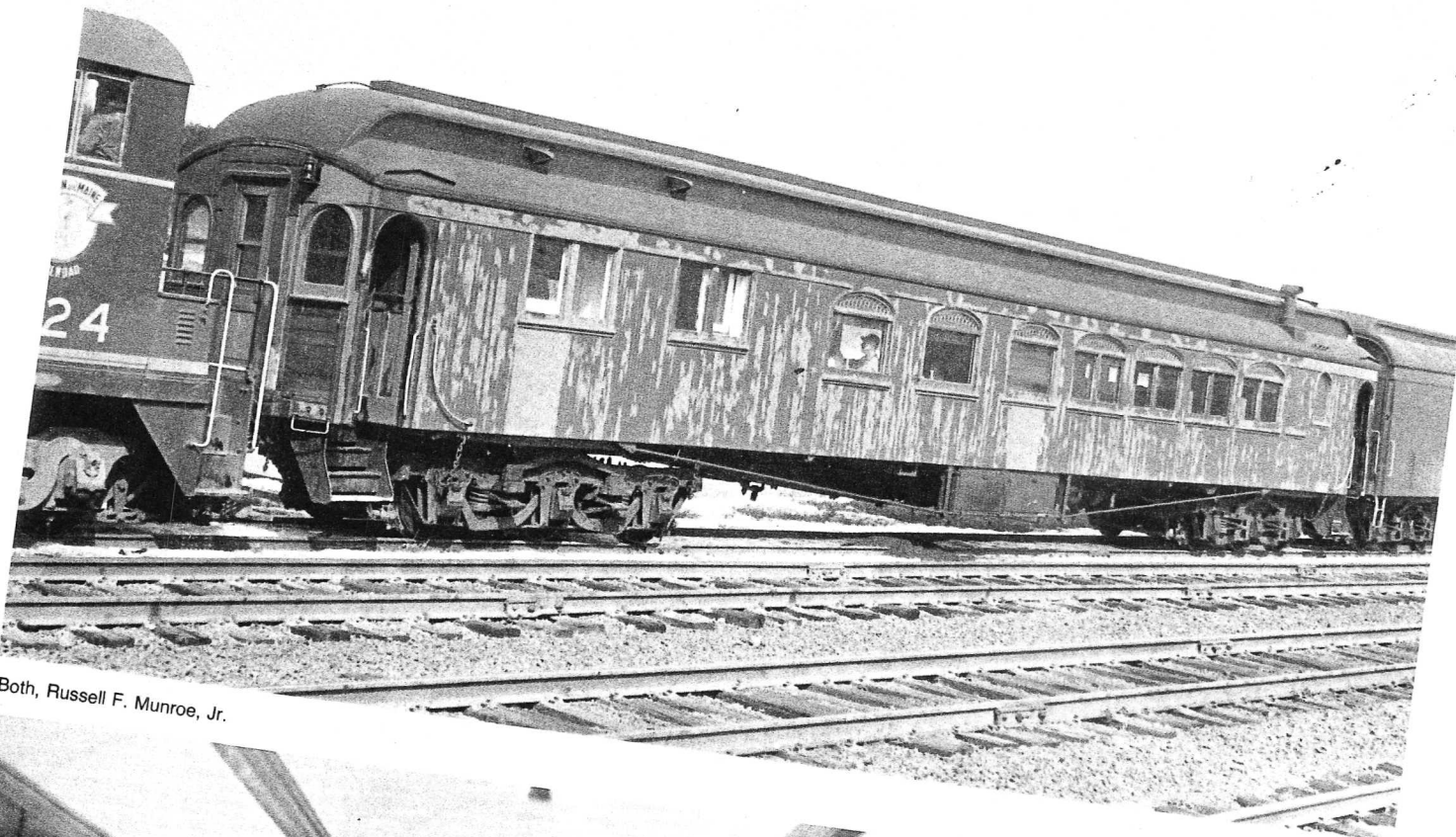
William R. Mischler



### SOURCES

Mr. George Barth furnished many fine plans of passenger cars from the wood and steel era. He and Mr. Stanley Y. Whitney supplied information as to where and on what trains these cars ran. Mr. Clyde R. Smith supplied roster material and disposition of the cars. I wish to thank these three men for their valuable assistance.

Research sources include *Steam, Steel and Limiteds* by William W. Kratville, *Railway Age* of February 12, 1927, and the *Boston & Maine Railroad Car Classification* book of March 25, 1925, from the collection of Douglas M. Rice.

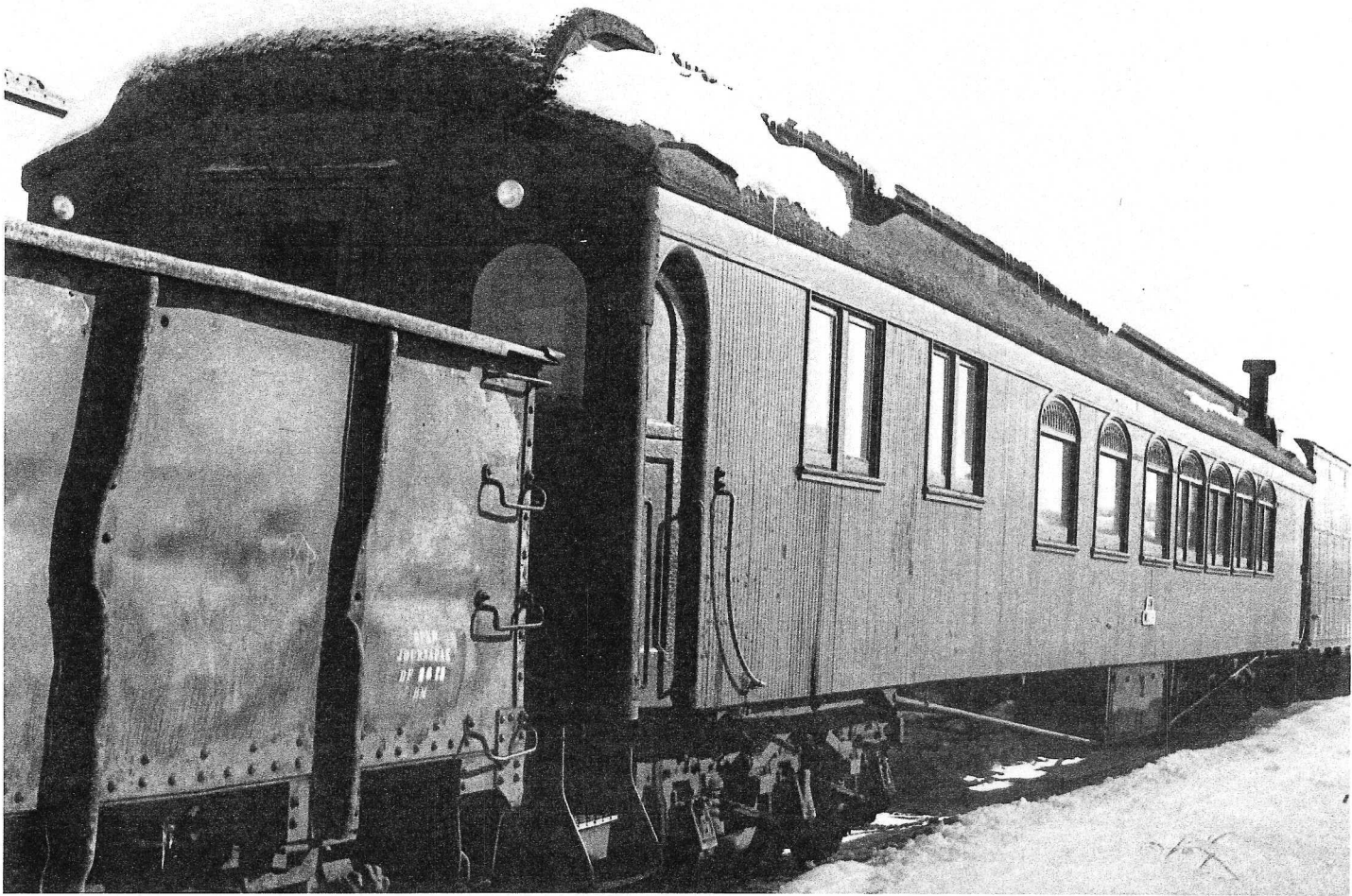


Both, Russell F. Munroe, Jr.



The patchy appearance of M3288 (above) at North Chelmsford on March 22, 1965, makes one wonder if it wasn't pressed into service while in the midst of undergoing repairs. An inside view of the M3288 (below) as it appeared on the same day appears to show that a part of the interior was still well-preserved. At East Deerfield in December 1975 (opposite page, both), M3288 quietly awaits a call to a service which the car's original builders had not intended.





Both, William R. Mischler

