

Baby Came Home Last Month

After two years and three months of traveling on foreign railroads, the Boston and Maine's long absent flat car, No. 33509, arrived back on our lines June 1.

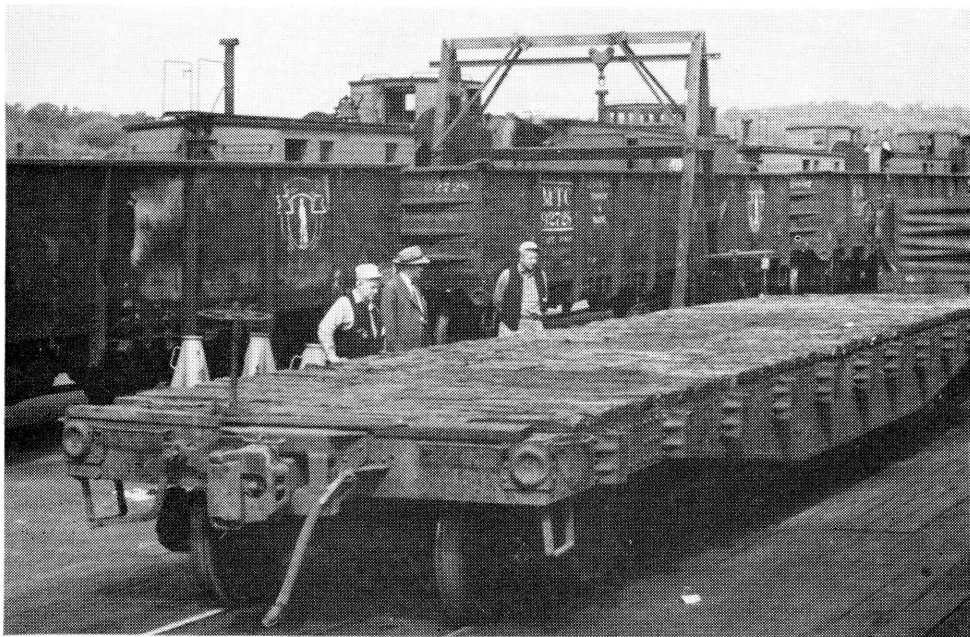
The fact that 33509 had been away from the B. and M. over two years was not important, in itself. Many of our freight cars are away four and five years at a time. But 33509 happened to be the last of 5200 interchange freight cars on which we must install AB brakes before next January 1 to comply with a ruling of the Interstate Commerce Commission.

Several years ago, the Commission issued a decree directing all railroads to install AB brakes on interchange revenue cars before Jan. 1, 1950. Because of the heavy traffic volume and the consequent demand for freight cars, the deadline was postponed a year and then two years, simply because most railroads could not get their cars home and equipped in time to meet the earlier deadline.

The B. and M. had equipped 99.5 per cent of its cars with AB brakes by Jan. 1, 1950, and by last year end 99.9 per cent had been equipped. In fact, flat car 33509 was about the last straggler. Efforts to get it headed for home were started last year. Its location was pinned down repeatedly, but it always seemed to move on to a new destination just ahead of a telegram intended to turn it toward home. Two months ago, the search narrowed down and cooperative efforts of the Missouri Pacific Lines, the New York Central and the Car Interchange Bureau of the I.C.C. resulted in bringing it home, empty, to Rotterdam Junction, N. Y.

A few days later it was undergoing an overhaul at East Deerfield car shops, getting a new deck or flooring, new diaphragms and, of course, AB brakes.

Records of Car Accountant W. S. Stallard show that 33509 has been earning money for our railroad in the two years and three months



Just another badly worn car but it got more than usual notice when it arrived last month on our East Deerfield rip tracks, because it was our long missing flat car, No. 33509. Looking it over, left to right, are: Frank Buckley, assistant foreman; George B. McElroy, general car foreman; and Alcide J. Lambert, foreman wreckmaster

it has been away. It was used by at least 35 different railroads, several of them on repeated occasions. It traveled thousands of miles, most of the time in a concentric shuffle of the middle West and Middle Atlantic states. Once it got as far away as Texas, another time it got to St. Louis, and its closest return to home was in September, 1950, when it arrived on the New Haven Railroad and then moved West again.

Installation of AB brakes on the 33509 completes a job that has cost our railroad about \$1,500,000 at an average installation cost of \$300 per car.

The result on a national basis is to provide interchange freight cars with a more improved type of braking device. But a significant note is that the job was done by government decree, but at the private expense of the Nation's railroads. How different the government's treatment of our great competitors, the commercial airlines!

Two years ago, the government decreed that large airports should be equipped with ground approach radar control, improved

safety device for landing airplanes, but the taxpayers, not the airlines, are footing the multi-million dollar costs of doing that job!

Williams Promoted

Walworth B. Williams, recently graduated as a special apprentice at Billerica Shops, was appointed mechanical inspector, effective June 1, by Paul C. Dunn, superintendent of locomotive maintenance.

Williams is assigned to the Mechanical Department offices in Boston, replacing Walter E. True, now acting general foreman at Mechanicville Diesel Shops.

JUST CURIOUS

Zeke bought a pink shirt with huge purple dots. In the pocket was a note with a girl's name and address and a request that the buyer of the shirt send his photograph.

"Ah, romance," thought Zeke, and mailed a snapshot.

Several days later he tore open her letter: "Thanks for the photo. I just wanted to see what kind of a jerk would buy such a shirt."