



# A HISTORY OF COLORADO & SOUTHERN CABOOSES, PART 2

## RENUMBERING FROM SOUTH PARK TO C&S

BY DERRELL "SOUTH PARK" POOLE  
PHOTOS FROM THE AUTHOR'S COLLECTION  
ILLUSTRATIONS BY THE AUTHOR

ONE HALLMARK OF Union Pacific, and therefore Denver, South Park & Pacific, history was the system-wide renumbering of June, 1885. The UP needed to reduce confusion when its subsidiary lines swapped or borrowed equipment from one another. But the loss of two waycars prior to that renumbering greatly has complicated our attempts to trace the South Park cars back to their original numbers. In Part 1, I suggested cabooses first appeared on the road as early as 1878. I based calculations on a ratio of three engines to one caboose and suggested the railroad built as many as eleven by 1880. The UP built twelve more by 1884, but the records indicate two cars were gone by the end of that year.

In this installment, we will try to equate some 1884 caboose numbers to what they became under the UP renumbering system in 1885. We also shall further the historical account of the cabooses up to the turn of the century. Finally, we shall explore the appearance of two new cars and how they may have fit into the roster.

### ANALYSIS OF 1885 CABOOSE EQUATIONS

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After years of investigation, I fear we never will be able to trace each caboose to its original number. So I engaged in a very lengthy and complicated mathematical analysis to equate as many South Park to UP numbers as possible. The results of my "equations" are simply estimates and I welcome you to disagree and encourage you to share your reasons why. Regardless, I feel it important to share those equations because they may at least provide a starting point on a topic where we have very little else to go on.

First the facts I based my equations on—and they are few! Post-1884 photos have identified cars 64, 72, 79 and, tentatively, 69. Cars 60 and 79 specifically appeared in the first *Official Railway Equipment Guide* of June, 1885. According to a report in the August 3, 1881 *Denver Republican*, we are all but certain a wreck destroyed one caboose the day before. We have determined through UP records that waycars 75, 74, 73, and 72 were the only cars the railroad built in 1882. Finally, *C&S Records, Folio Number 27* stated flatly that C&S 308 was built in 1882. Those are the only facts.

We are fortunate to know C&S 308 was built in 1882 because that establishes a reference halfway through the roster. C&S 308 could have only been 75, 74, 73, or 72. By taking into account that reference and the two missing cars, I found only 72 and 73 were valid possibilities. On the other hand, the first lost car had no number higher than 71 but, because we have no such information about the second car, we are unable to be sure which of the two became 308. Still, I found 73 eight times more likely to have become C&S 308 than 72.

**Above.** Note the dark freight car color on number 64, the white lettering, no WAYCAR arched over the number, and unusual grab irons. The photo dates from the mid-1880s (Denver Public Library, Western History Department, Collier Photo).

Thus I consider 73 to be a pivotal point in the caboos roster. From there I have tentatively established equations for South Park caboose numbers 72 through 82. Fortunately, that was the better half of the roster because, as the Chart illustrates, more higher numbered cars became C&S equipment.

#### HISTORY 1885-1899

The D,SP&P cabooses became UP numbers 1500 through 1520 and Colorado Central cars 1725 and 1726 in June, 1885. Despite noble UP intentions, there is no indication crews actually painted on those numbers as late as 1888. Caboose renumbering may never have occurred until after the reorganization of both roads. Repainting occurred by the early 1890s and certainly the new numbers appeared after that. The new color actually was a freight car red, probably similar to the dark color I discussed in Part 1.

The South Park "lost" two more cars in the last half of 1885. The *Pacific Railway Commission*, a committee to investigate UP mismanagement, indicated nineteen

cars existed in April, 1887 but a third had disappeared by December according to the *Union Pacific Journals*. A fourth followed the next year.

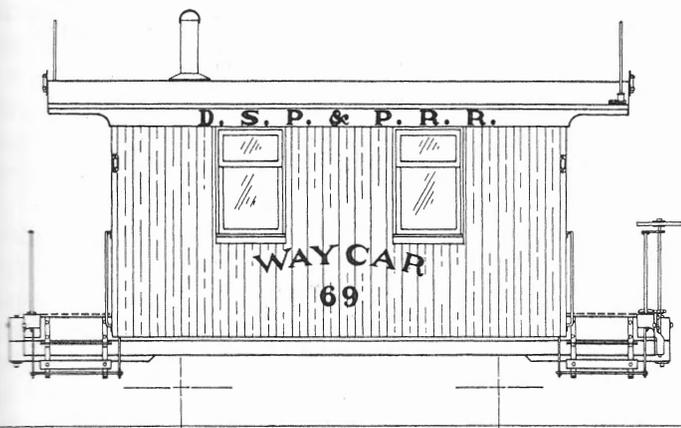
The UP reorganized the D,SP&P into the Denver Leadville & Gunnison in July, 1889 to avoid receivership and loss of the road. The name changed but bad management continued. The DL&G appraised seventeen cabooses at \$450.00 each in December 1892 but the 1890 *Union Pacific Annual Report* had listed only sixteen cars and just fifteen in 1892. Although records were more detailed than in the beginning, they also were more confusing. Perhaps the DL&G had counted certain cars, "unserviceable, but not yet scrapped". The car they lost in 1890 was probably 1520 since the railroad no longer specifically listed it after that year.

The *DL&G Auditor's Journal* made corrections between October 12, 1893 and September 29, 1894 when cabooses "dropped from the equipment because of their condition but carried nevertheless in the equipment account" finally disappeared from the books. A portion of that correction

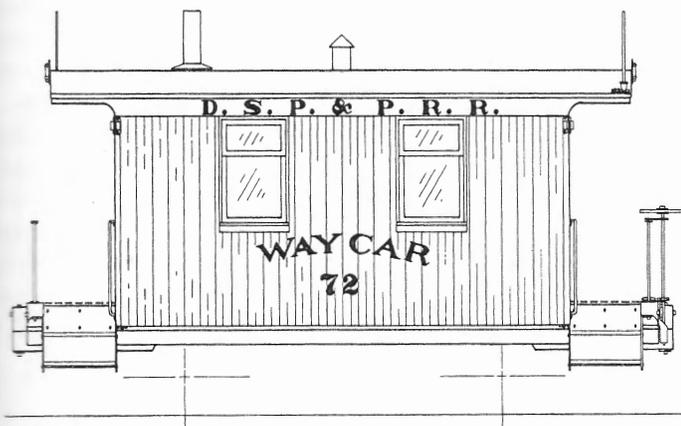
occurred after an August, 1894 inventory. A total credit of \$2,131.80 went to the "new equipment" account. If you divide that figure by five, the value of each caboose would be \$426.36, a figure approximating the 1892 DL&G appraisal. That would account for the cars gone between 1892 and 1893 but not necessarily on the records until the fall of 1894. By August, 1894, the railroad recorded only eleven cabooses.

The UP had sidestepped receivership in 1889 but was unable to avoid it on October 13, 1893. A court appointed five men receivers to the entire system but none lived in the state. Governor John Evan, who still held stock in the railroad, had filed suit on September 15, 1893 to remove the Colorado Roads from the care of the UP. His efforts, and those of other interested parties, resulted in the appointment of a Denver resident, Frank Trumbull, as sole receiver of the UPD&G and DL&G on August 7, 1894.

The UP also reorganized the Colorado Central and on April 1, 1890 it became part of the Union Pacific Denver & Gulf. The UPD&G was a large system comprising

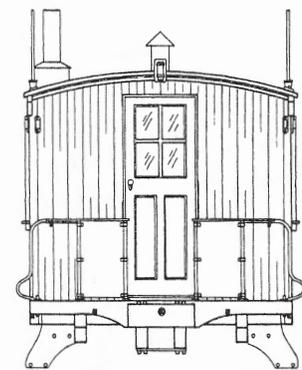
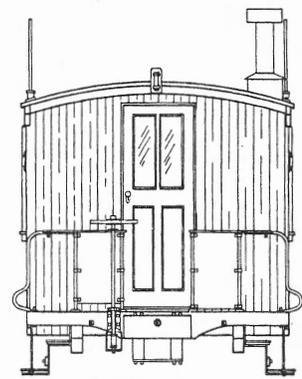


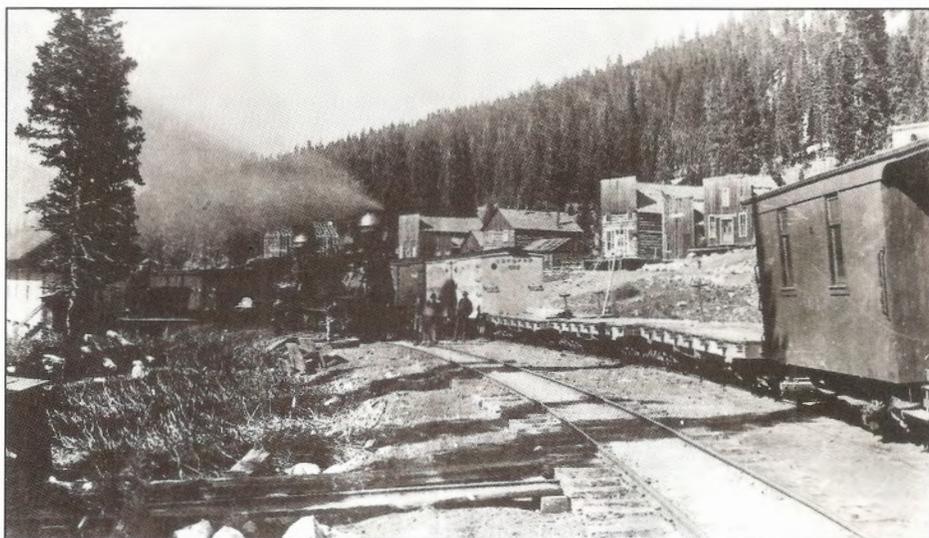
SCALE 1:64  
3/16-INCH = 1 FOOT



**Drawing 1:** Waycar 69 was probably the same dark color as number 64 but it did have the word "WAYCAR" over the number and its lettering was black. In drawings, note the construction changes in each group of cars. The D,SP&P probably built waycar number 69 in 1880 while 64 may have been a product of the previous year.

**Drawing 2:** Number 72 appears in several W.H. Jackson photos. In one view, (on page 163 of David Digerness' *The Mineral Belt, Volume 1*) you barely can see lettering with lighter colored shadowing offset to the left. Another Jackson photo shows a similar car on the highline (page 46 of Margaret Coel's *Goin' Railroading*). The unidentifiable car has flagpoles with unusual spherical flags.





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twelve roads, both standard and narrow gauge. Officially, the DL&G was separate from the "Gulf System" but from then on it received treatment as a token subsidiary of the UPD&G. In fact, the receiver filed no Annual Reports for the DL&G until 1898.

At the end of receivership, in the fall of 1898, Trumbull organized the Colorado & Southern Railway Company. The two roads officially became one in December but the C&S only took possession on January 12, 1899. The DL&G passed on twelve cabooses to the new company and the UPD&G passed three. Each had acquired an additional car!

### CABOOSES OF THE RECEIVERSHIP 1894-1899

So the fundamental question is, "Where did the railroads get the extra cars by 1898?" The DL&G submitted an *Inventory of Equipment* to the Receiver dated Midnight, August 7, 1894. Among the eleven cabooses it listed were 1500, 1503, 1505, 1507, 1508, 1511, 1514, 1513, 1515, 1516, and 1519. In September, the Auditor wrote that the railroad had scrapped one caboose

in October, 1893, prior to inventory, but that it still appeared on the books. For some reason, 1518 never appeared in the inventory but it is highly unlikely the railroad scrapped it in October because it reappeared five months later. At the same time 1518 returned, a new car suddenly appeared. That was Utah & Northern 1601 and it shows up along with 1518 on an *Inventory of Tools on Cabooses*.

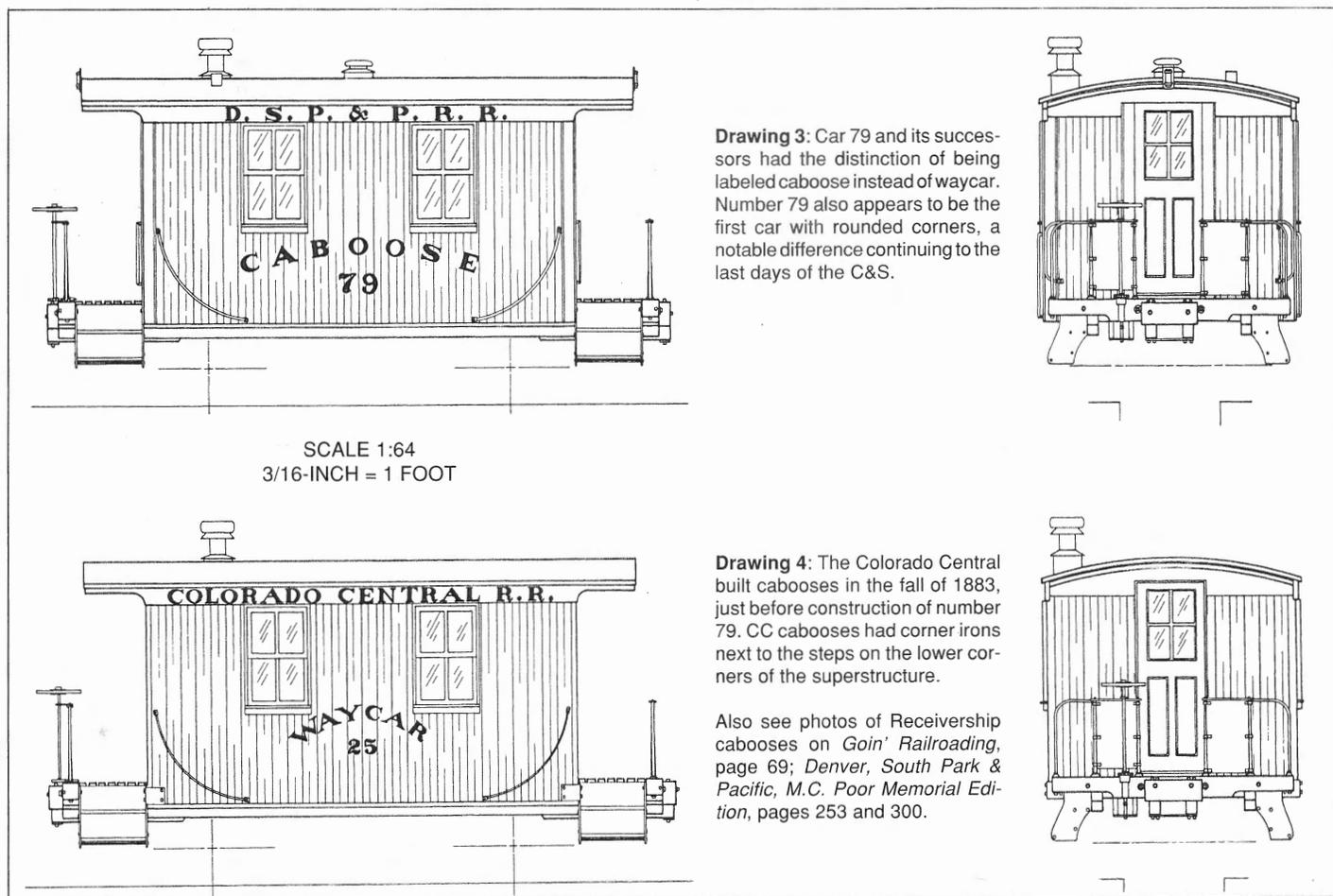
In other words, only ten of the eleven inventoried cars actually existed but they never counted one car anyway. The inventory also never took into account another car the railroad probably had borrowed from the U&N when both railroads still belonged to the UP. But the records never reinvented car 1518 by renumbering it 1601 because both appeared on the same document as two different cars.

It is unknown where 1518 was but it may have been on loan or simply an inventory oversight. On the other hand, it does appear 1601 replaced a vacated road number after April, 1896. In fact, there was a precedent for filling vacated numbers with the purchase of used equipment. When UPD&G purchased stock cars from the

same road, for instance, they simply re-assigned vacated road numbers to the new cars. What is especially noteworthy about that practice is that they always filled the lowest vacated numbers first.

In the case of the DL&G, the twelfth car seems to have been an ex-U&N caboose but what number did it become? As with stock cars, the railroad probably filled the lowest vacated number first. According to the inventory, that should have been 1501 but no such number passed on to the C&S; only those numbers on the 1894 inventory, along with 1518, did. U&N 1601 must have become one of the numbers on the list in 1894. Since number 1501 was blank, car 1501 was not the lowest car missing.

Car 1500 was the first the South Park built, perhaps sixteen years earlier. It had no cupola nor, it is reasonable to believe, was it the largest. Yet, C&S records indicate 1500 became 303, that it was the largest car from the DL&G, and that it had a center cupola, or "lookout". Where information appears, all other cars from the road were very similar in size to one another but substantially smaller than 303. The railroad counted the original 1500 in August,



SCALE 1:64  
3/16-INCH = 1 FOOT

**Drawing 3:** Car 79 and its successors had the distinction of being labeled caboose instead of waycar. Number 79 also appears to be the first car with rounded corners, a notable difference continuing to the last days of the C&S.

**Drawing 4:** The Colorado Central built cabooses in the fall of 1883, just before construction of number 79. CC cabooses had corner irons next to the steps on the lower corners of the superstructure.

Also see photos of Receivership cabooses on *Goin' Railroad*, page 69; *Denver, South Park & Pacific, M.C. Poor Memorial Edition*, pages 253 and 300.

1894 but, as we have seen, one of those cars was nonexistent. In light of the circumstances, I think that car was the first 1500.

In 1885, the UP built four cars for the U&N very similar to the South Park's but larger, with center cupolas. They cost \$656.00 each and carried numbers 1600 through 1603. By the 1890s, at least one was off the U&N property. Considering the size of the 1500 that came to the C&S, in comparison to the U&N cars, it is easy to imagine where 1601 might have fit into the roster. Still, without hard records, we may never be sure of what happened to 1500 or 1601.

Car 1500 was one of three DL&G cabooses in the late 1890s with a lookout. After the spring of 1896, the railroad simultaneously rebuilt 1507 and 1516. That dual rebuild is significant because the cars became so identical that *C&S Folio Number 27* assigned both to the same page and drawing. That helps to distinguish them from 1500 in photos. As rebuilt, 1507 and 1516 had a lookout in the center of the roof with roofwalks to the ladders at the ends. Unlike 1500, both were small with tiny square side windows. 1500 had the large rectangular windows typical of early 1880s vintage, again suggesting it was an ex-U&N car. I think all three cars appear in photos but we can identify only 1507 by a number. Nevertheless, it is possible to make those distinctions.

By 1895, the Gulf Road also obtained another caboose. Car 1782 very likely had eight wheels and first served in 1896 as an outfit car on the standard gauge. It quickly became a caboose but even then appeared too light for the standard gauge. It went to the narrow gauge. Perhaps the car originally was narrow gauge. While other railroads were possible sources of that car, it is most likely 1782 came from the U&N. The road built nearly two dozen such cars in the early 1880s. Many were on broad gauge trucks and several left the property.

A strange caboose with the rotary plow appears in a photograph at Como after the rotary was smashed at Uneva Lake. The caboose had three square windows, a center cupola, and a pair of trucks! Perhaps it was for the "Armstrong" shovel brigade that always tagged along with the plow trains.

## CONCLUSION

Three pivotal events occurred to the

CHART												
1884	1885	1886	1887	1888	1889	1890	1891	1892	1893	1894	1895	C&S
60	1500	1500	1500	1500	1500	1500	1500	1500		1601	1500	303
	1501											
	1502	1502	1502	1502	1502							
	1503	1503	1503	1503	1503	1503	1503	1503	1503	1503	1503	304
	1504											
	1505	1505	1505	1505	1505	1505	1505	1505	1505	1505	1505	305
	1506	1506	1506									
	1507	1507	1507	1507	1507	1507	1507	1507	1507	1507	1507	306
	1508	1508	1508	1508	1508	1508	1508	1508	1508	1508	1508	307
	1509	1509	1509	1509	1509	1509	1509	1509	1509			
72	1510	1510	1510	1510	1510	1510	1510	1510	1510			
73	1511	1511	1511	1511	1511	1511	1511	1511	1511	1511	1511	308
74	1512	1512	1512	1512	1512	1512	1512	1512	1512			
75	1513	1513	1513	1513	1513	1513	1513	1513	1513	1513	1513	309
76	1514	1514	1514	1514	1514	1514	1514	1514	1514	1514	1514	310
77	1515	1515	1515	1515	1515	1515	1515	1515	1515	1515	1515	311
78	1516	1516	1516	1516	1516	1516	1516	1516	1516	1516	1516	312
79	1517	1517	1517	1517	1517	1517	1517	1517	1517			
80	1518	1518	1518	1518	1518	1518	1518	1518	1518	1518	1518	313
81	1519	1519	1519	1519	1519	1519	1519	1519	1519	1519	1519	314
82	1520	1520	1520	1520	1520	1520						

Explanation of chart: The original South Park numbers (to the far left) are my best estimate. I based them on a very involved mathematical analysis. We are unable to estimate the blanks under that column with the information at our disposal. Blanks under the columns to the right indicate the car in that row appears to have disappeared at about that time but, in most cases, that too is an estimate. We can document the cars lasting to the C&S numbers to the far right factually, beyond question.

railroads during the period under discussion. They contributed to the evolution of South Park and Colorado Central cabooses. The first was the UP renumbering of 1885. The loss of two cars before that event greatly has complicated any simple equation to relate old numbers to new. A very complex mathematical analysis of the cars may help to answer almost half those equations. The second event was the series of reorganizations in 1889 and 1890. They finally may have induced the railroads to repaint and re-letter the cars to their current numbers but continued mismanagement undoubtedly contributed to the neglect and decline of the roster. By 1894, the DL&G had scrapped or destroyed more than half its waycars. Finally, the appointment of Colorado resident Frank Trumbull as receiver of the roads was pivotal. Trumbull had much interest in the State and the prosperity of both roads. During his tenure, the railroads did rather well and that, in turn, benefited the cabooses. Not only did a few undergo rebuilds but the rosters even increased.

In 1898, the UPD&G renumbered its cabooses 61 through 63, then both roads

prepared for a new company and century. Fifteen well worn cabooses shuttled behind equally worn freight cars and locomotives. The railroad would replace most of those freight cars and sell many of the locomotives. But there would be no new cabooses and, for several years, there would be no modernization. A few waycars would fail to make it to that point and several that did would arrive in unusable condition. Next time we will examine early C&S cabooses.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY & CREDITS

**Consultants:** Ron Rudnick

**Files Collection:** Colorado State Historical Society, Colorado Railroad Museum, Ron Rudnick, Rick Steele, Derrell W. Poole

**Drawings:** C&S Folio No. 27, John W. Maxwell, Charles H. Brommer

**Volumes:** M. C. Poor, *Memorial Edition Denver, South Park & Pacific*, Rocky Mountain Railroad Club; *Official Railway Equipment Registers*, various volumes, June 1885-1943; James L. Ehernberger, *Union Pacific Equipment List & Renumbering-June 1, 1885*.



J.R. RIDDLE PHOTO, AUTHOR'S COLLECTION.

# A HISTORY OF COLORADO & SOUTHERN CABOOSSES

## THE SOUTH PARK DAYS

BY DERRELL "SOUTH PARK" POOLE  
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ILLUSTRATIONS BY THE AUTHOR

**T**HE MOST IMPORTANT questions about Denver, South Park & Pacific cabooses (or, more properly, waycars) have to do with their arrival on the railroad: Who built them and when? In some cases the records are clear but, for the most part, they say little or nothing. The cars varied and their differences do offer clues but a more holistic examination may better help to answer our questions.

The cabooses belonged to an organization that experienced both success and trauma. What happened to the railroad as a whole influenced the acquisition and well being of its equipment. [*Author's note:* An examination of the locomotive and, perhaps, the passenger equipment rosters may support that statement. It stands to reason the "effect" influenced all types of equipment.] When the railroad grew, its

roster grew. When it stagnated, the roster leveled or declined. We may never know every specific about South Park waycars but, when we find a gap, we may deduce enough from existing clues for a close approximation of the truth.

1878 - 1884

The Denver, South Park & Pacific be-

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**Above.** In this rare 1881 view of a work train at Hancock, an early (albeit unidentifiable) caboose is visible. Note it is of the same dark color as the rest of the consist. The photo of the depot and waycar appears in print for the first time.

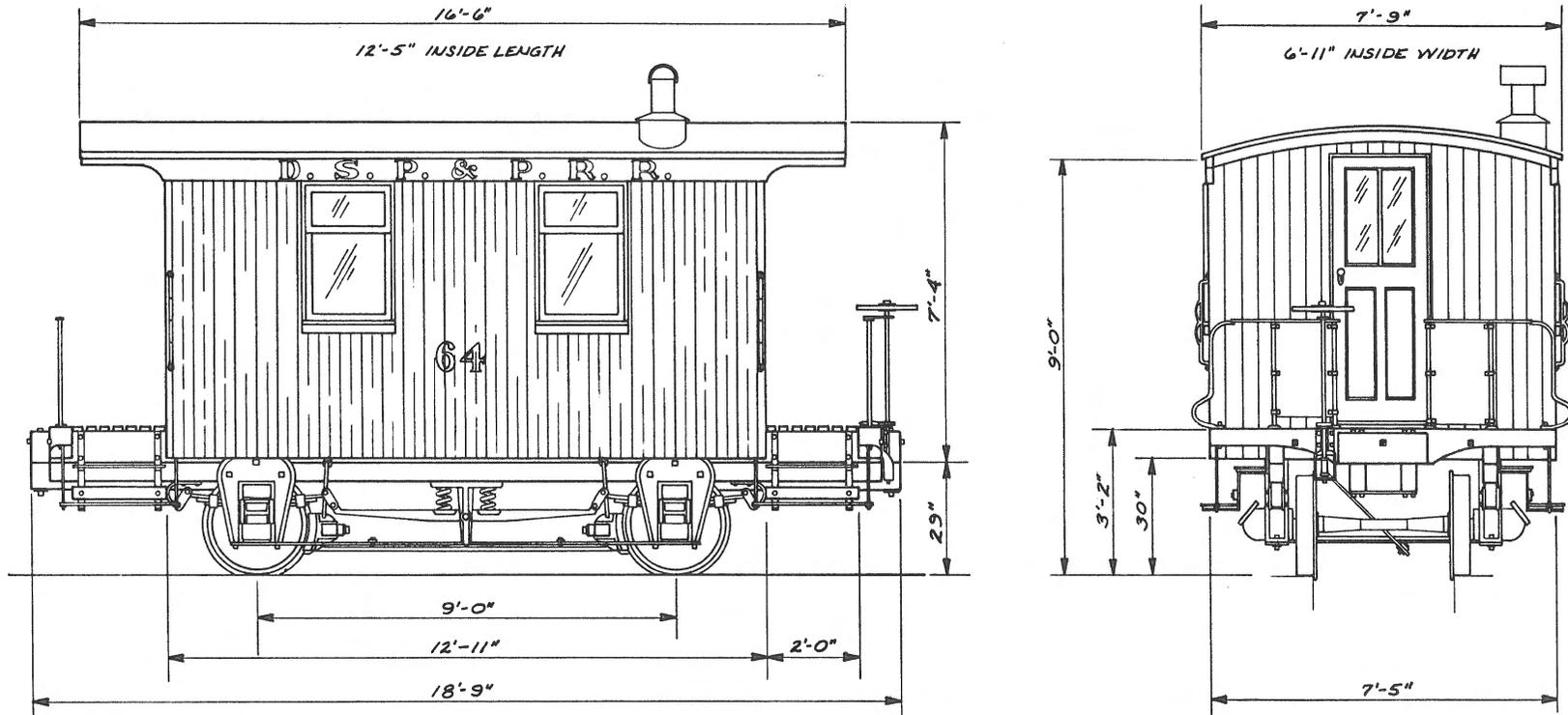
# DENVER, SOUTH PARK & PACIFIC WAYCAR NUMBER 64

DRAWING BY DERRELL W. POOLE  
© 1995 DERRELL W. POOLE. ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.

Perhaps waycar number 64 was representative of the first seven cars the D, SP&P built. It was a dark freight car color and had simple, white "South Park" Roman lettering. Note the unique grab irons and platform steps. The side and end sheathing differed from one another. Such features, in comparison with later cars, made number 64 and its sisters unique.

1:48 SCALE  
1/4-INCH = 1 FOOT

Magazine purchaser may make photocopies of these drawings as an aid to his personal modelmaking but purchaser does not have the right to distribute copies of the drawings to others.



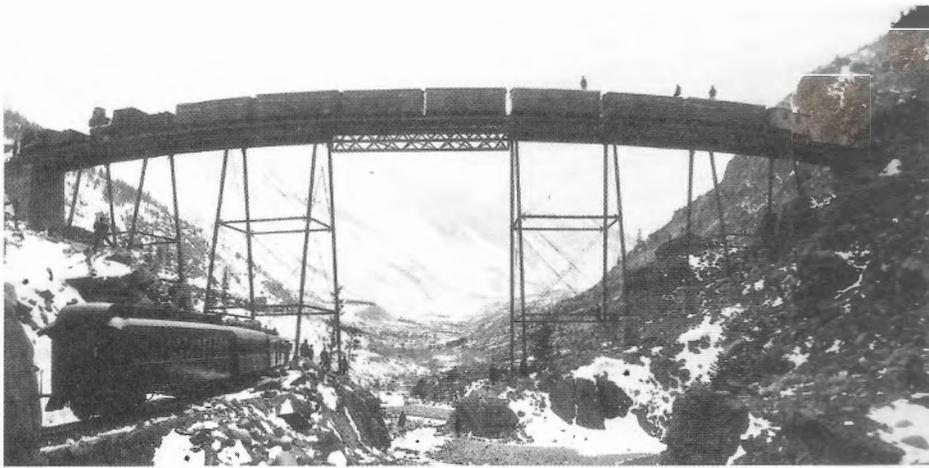


PHOTO FROM THE AUTHOR'S COLLECTION.

The Colorado Central owned two cars the Union Pacific built in the Fall of 1883. While they were very similar to previous South Park cars, they are the first we know of to have arched grab irons on the sides. They also were unique in having plates on the bottom of each corner.

gan operations in 1874 without waycars. A few locomotives, freight cars, and ornate coaches provided everything necessary for the sixteen mile run between Denver and Morrison. Then, in 1878, the railroad branched off at Bear Creek and headed up the Platte Canyon. By the end of the year, tracks had reached Grant and, in 1879, the railhead was at the top of Trout Creek Pass, 113 miles away. Leadville opened in 1880 through the Joint Operations Agreement (J.O.A.) with the Denver & Rio Grande Railway and the South Park headed up Chalk Creek Canyon.

At the end of 1880, negotiations were underway between the D,SP&P and Jay Gould. On January 1, 1881, the railroad became the property of the Union Pacific. That may be the worst event the South Park experienced in the 19th century. Goals of continental expansion vanished and operating practices of the Union Pacific almost strangled the South Park out of existence.

The J.O.A. fell apart as first the D&RG betrayed trust by building its own line to Gunnison and then took most of the Leadville traffic. The dismal amount of trackage the South Park added in 1881 may reflect those problems. In 1882, real work began on the South Park's own route into Leadville. Also that year, the railroad finally tapped Gunnison and ran a line into Alma. Expansion continued in 1883 with rails into Baldwin and Kokomo but they failed to reach Leadville until early in 1884.

## WAYCARS

Almost no facts exist to help determine when the first cabooses appeared on the South Park. A few hints may suggest the waycar appeared somewhat earlier than historians previously thought. A rumor of a newspaper report alluding to such cars in the late 1870s has circulated but, until such hard evidence appears, we may extrapolate more productive hints from the early history of the railroad.

During the "Morrison days", the railroad owned only two locomotives. Grades and curves across the broad South Platte River Valley were mild enough that heavy coaches and combines behind a freight train presented no real problems for the exceedingly light motive power. The expansion during 1878 increased traffic and the South Park bought three new locomotives. By the end of 1880 and the opening of the Rockies' interior, that number had grown to thirty-six.

The Morrison run hardly needed two locomotives let alone a single caboose. That changed dramatically almost as soon as the line hit the Platte Canyon. The additional volume certainly highlighted the need to replace heavy coaches with lightweight cabooses, especially as the line encountered steeper grades. The weight of the nonrevenue waycars was purposely minimal so they would demand the least amount of an engine's tractive effort.

Passenger traffic grew as well until the

South Park needed every coach. It was much cheaper to add cabooses than coaches and, besides, passenger traffic also was growing so the railroad needed every one of those cars in that capacity. So we might base an estimate of when South Park waycars first appeared, and how many the line added each year, on the growth of the mainline, traffic volume, and the addition of motive power.

After carefully comparing the number of cabooses to that of locomotives in years when we know both, I have arrived at a ratio of three engines to one waycar. If we apply that ratio to the years 1878 and 1879, at least one car could have appeared the first year and as many as six the following year. By the end of 1880, eleven waycars may have been in operation.

No significant trackage appeared in 1881. Apparently traffic leveled off since no new locomotives appeared. That seems to be a symptom of Union Pacific management. Since the end of the year was more prosperous, we might hypothesize the railroad added one waycar at about that time.

Early in 1882, the railroad began keeping more detailed records and the quality of entries improves steadily. For instance a debit of \$411.55 each for "freight cars" appears both in January and February. Boxcars, coal cars, and refrigerator cars all cost more than \$500.00 apiece. Flatcars cost as little as \$341.00 each. It would have been unusual for the railroad to buy only one of any such car. But a caboose did cost about \$400 and it was common to buy them one at a time. In March, an entry actually shows \$1,114.57 for "new cabooses" but offers no further detail.

The ambiguous nature of the early 1882 records may suggest the shops built one caboose in January, one in February, and perhaps two or three in March. If the March entry was for three cars, each would

Detail of the photo above.



have been ridiculously cheap. On the other hand, some waycars cost over \$500 in 1884. I believe the entry represents two cars for \$557.29 each. Finally, the ratio of locomotives to cabooses suggests the railroad built four cars in 1882.

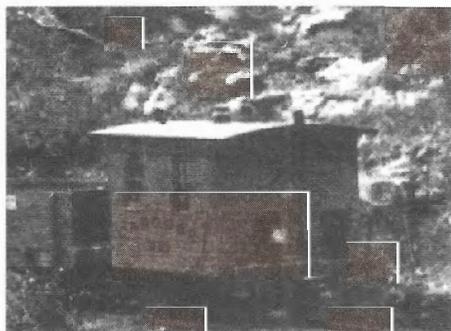
Such deductions have flaws. In September 1883, the South Park again acquired cabooses. Entries identify them as numbers 76, 77, and 78 at a cost of only \$400.25 each. In January 1884, records show the cost of waycar number 79 as \$565.46 and, in March, number 80 cost \$502.36. In May, cars number 81 and 82 cost \$456.22 each. So it seems the price of cabooses varied. Without more accurate records, we must remain uncertain of how many cars the South Park built during the first quarter of 1882.

By 1884, the South Park had built twenty-three waycars but the Union Pacific annual report indicated only twenty-one existed at the end of that year. Nobody has identified the first lost car but, if we believe a report in the August 3, 1881 edition of the *Denver Republican*, a rear end collision crushed three cars, including a caboose. Regardless of whether the wreck caused the loss of that first car, it is fairly safe to assume it was gone before the end of 1883 because the U.P. journal wrote off only one more car for 1884.

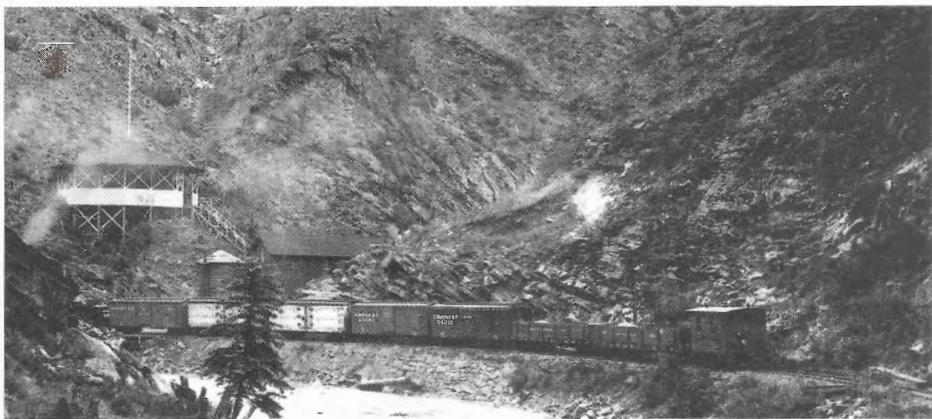
#### COLORADO CENTRAL CABOOSES

The Colorado Central had been under U.P. control since 1879 and had operated between Denver and locations in Clear Creek Canyon since 1872. It went without cabooses until the fall of 1883 but the entire line had not yet exceeded fifty miles. Most grades between Golden and Georgetown were under three percent with only one over four. Perhaps anticipation of the Georgetown Loop (it opened the fol-

Detail of the photo above.



OUTDOOR RAILROADER



WILLIAM H. JACKSON PHOTO, COLORADO HISTORICAL SOCIETY.

The South Park built car 79 in January, 1884 beginning the last series of its own waycars. Rounded corners and the word "CABOOSE" over the numbers were among its distinguishing characteristics.

lowing year) caused the U.P. to build two cars by the end of 1883. They carried numbers 26 and 27 and cost \$548.00 each. The need for cabooses must have remained nominal for no more appeared for many years. Besides, the Colorado Central often borrowed cars from the South Park.

#### DETAIL VARIATIONS

The typical waycar had a rounded roof with no cupola, four wheels, and manual brakes. It had a platform on each end and two double hung windows on each side. It was lightweight, derailed easily and often, and railed nearly as easily. The differences are noteworthy because they may help relate unknown cars to those we can identify. That, in turn, may suggest who built them.

It appears the earliest cars differed from later ones and we may be able to draw a clear line between what appears to be South Park built and Union Pacific built cars. The date that line represents is January 1, 1881. The U.P. picked up the building program after that time and maintained the South Park's design. They also introduced some improvements and variations.

If our theories are correct, the South Park would have built car 64 in 1879. It had white lettering and lacked the word "WAYCAR" over the number. It was the only car in photos with such a representation (even as late as 1885) but, reasonably, all cars of that vintage must have had similar lettering. That may have included cars 60 through 66. A photo of what might be car 69 (its identity is uncertain) and

those of all subsequent cars show dark lettering and the word "WAYCAR" over the road number.

That is a peculiar distinction and has caused some historians to suggest South Park waycars were originally white and the railroad later repainted several to a dark color. But a photo at Hancock shows a boxcar red caboose, the same color as the other cars in the train. Since the date of the photo is 1881, it would suggest repainting took place a little earlier than previous estimates. Or maybe it never occurred at all. It seems odd that the railroad would repaint older cars a new color and still continue to paint new cars the previous light color. Also consider this: Car number 69, a dark car, appears in an 1888 photograph with an unidentified light car. That was well after waycar renumbering yet both still retain their original numbers, lettering and, presumably, colors. If repainting had occurred as early as 1881, why were not both cars dark? And why did they retain their old numbers?

The point is, the U.P. had little concern for the color or numbers of waycars on its offshoot subsidiary. Older cars generally retained their original freight car color but U.P. built cars were a light color, probably a system-wide usage. Incidentally, the light color was more likely yellow than white because that was the color the Union Pacific used on its cabooses. The difference in color may help us identify a car's origin.

Obviously, we may divide waycars into two main groups: Those the South Park itself built and those the Union Pacific built. Other details support that division but they also seem to subdivide each



PIKES PEAK LIBRARY.

This view dates from about 1888, long after the Union Pacific had renumbered waycars...on paper. In reality, they retained not only their original numbers into the late 1880s but also retained their original out-of-the-shop colors. The dark car may be number 69.

group further. Waycar number 64 had platform steps consisting of straps and plates but number 69, perhaps of 1880 vintage, had box-type steps similar to those on coaches and chair cars. The U.P. continued that style and, in later years, even replaced the strap-and-plate type.

Car number 64 is the only car with vertical grab irons on the sides at the corners. The center of each had two unusual "loops". It seems certain the South Park built number 69 yet it had no side grab irons. That may be one suggestion it was of a different vintage. It did have large, inverted L-shaped grab irons on its ends. Such an arrangement also appears on U.P. built car number 72 and the inverted "L" design continued in use until the last car. The sides of car 72 lacked arced grab irons but later cars had them. Records already prove those cars date from a different year than number 72. Still, checking such details shows how the logic may apply to cars with no records.

The first indication of arced grab irons was on Colorado Central cars dating from October, 1883 but they may have occurred on any car after number 72 (probably a product of January, 1882). In later years, all cars had such arced irons.

Comparing what appears to be Colorado Central waycar 26 with South Park waycar 79 yields more insight. Although both came from the same shops within a few months of one another, the C.C. cars had square corners while number 79 had round ones. Round corners were a feature of the last cars and the distinction was still visible in the Colorado & Southern days. The Colorado Central cars uniquely had corner plates at the bottom edges of their body.

The C.C. cars also appear to be the last to use the word "WAYCAR" over the road number. All lettering was dark but the word "CABOOSE" replaced "WAYCAR" on cars 79 and later. Other changes involved windows, stovepipes, roof vents, platform railings, flag and lantern holders, and even frames.

#### CONCLUSION

The infant D,SP&P had no need of cabooses until expansion began but, when that occurred, it seems very likely they would have acquired such lightweight, utilitarian cars as soon as possible. Close analysis suggests the theory that cabooses were unavailable until the early 1880s

seems less unlikely. Unfortunately, any narrative of early South Park cabooses must be nine parts theory to three parts fact because the facts simply are lacking. We have had to examine the cars closely, observe the conditions influencing the railroad, and monitor the acquisition of other equipment in order to speculate on what we are unable to document.

As the story continues, documentation becomes more plentiful but many fatal gaps in the records still exist. So deductions will continue in the next issue.

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DERRELL POOLE PHOTO

# A HISTORY OF COLORADO & SOUTHERN CABOOSSES, PART 3 1899-1917

BY DERRELL "SOUTH PARK" POOLE  
PHOTOS AND ILLUSTRATIONS FROM THE AUTHOR'S COLLECTION

**I**N JANUARY, 1899, the new Colorado & Southern Railway Company took possession of fifteen cabooses from the Union Pacific, Denver & Gulf and Denver, Leadville & Gunnison railroads. Eleven had belonged to the DL&G and, of those, ten were reportedly in fair condition in 1894. Still, the receivership spent \$1,375.00 to repair the group as a whole. In the mid

1890s, the car shops completely rebuilt at least two cars, adding new windows and center cupolas at that time. The shops may have rebuilt other cabooses as extensively but only two received lookouts. Also during that period, the DL&G obtained a twelfth car with an existing center cupola.

In 1898, the UPD&G renumbered its cars from 1725 and 1726 to 61 and 62. It

also acquired a third narrow gauge caboose and renumbered it from 1782 to 63. I think that caboose had eight wheels and two trucks and was the only such caboose the C&S ever owned. As we shall see, it lasted only a short time as a caboose.

So the DL&G contributed twelve cars to the new company while the UPD&G provided three. In this installment, we will

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*Above. Here is Derrell's conception of how one of the three cars the C&S scrapped between 1915 and 1917 may have appeared around 1912. The ICC had just enforced new USSA regulations and, to bring 314 into compliance quickly, the shops added a roofwalk and ladders. They soon would scrap the car, probably without ever adding a cupola. It is important to know the railroad's history to project such a model credibly.*

COLORADO & SOUTHERN CABOOSE DISPOSITION

PRE-C&S NUMBER (UPD&G)	1899 RENUMBERING	1911 RENUMBERING & DATE APPLIED	DATE SCRAPPED
61	300	1000 May 1912	
62	301	1001 Feb. 1912	Jan. 1915
63 (DL&G)	302 to outfit 1905		
1500	303	1002 Feb. 1912	
1503	304	1003 Feb. 1912	
1505	305	1004 Feb. 1912	
1507	306	1005 Feb. 1912	
1508	307 wrecked Sept. 1900		
1511	308	1006 Feb. 1912	
1513	309	1007 Feb. 1912	
1514	310	1008 June 1912	
1515	311 wrecked Feb. 1911		
1516	312	1009 Feb. 1912	
1518	313	1010 Feb. 1912	Jan. 1915
1519	314	1011 May 1912	Jan. 1915

examine how new ownership and other circumstances caused the greatest changes to the cabooses. The railroad renumbered them, rebuilt them, and added fixtures previously lacking from the cars. The C&S rebuilt its little bobbers into an enduring image.

EARLY RENUMBERING

The C&S immediately began renumbering its newly acquired rolling stock and the new company name soon was everywhere. Even though the railroads had been in receivership for five years, people had continued to identify them as part of the Union Pacific because that company's graphics still marked all the equipment. The UP was none too popular in Colorado. After the disastrous UP tenure, both the UPD&G and DL&G had returned from the brink of ruin under the guiding hand of receiver Frank Trumbull. Even though the financial picture was brighter, C&S leaders and bond holders apparently thought, as long as the railroads used UP markings, they would feel the public's ire. So the new company was understandably anxious to disassociate itself from the old image.

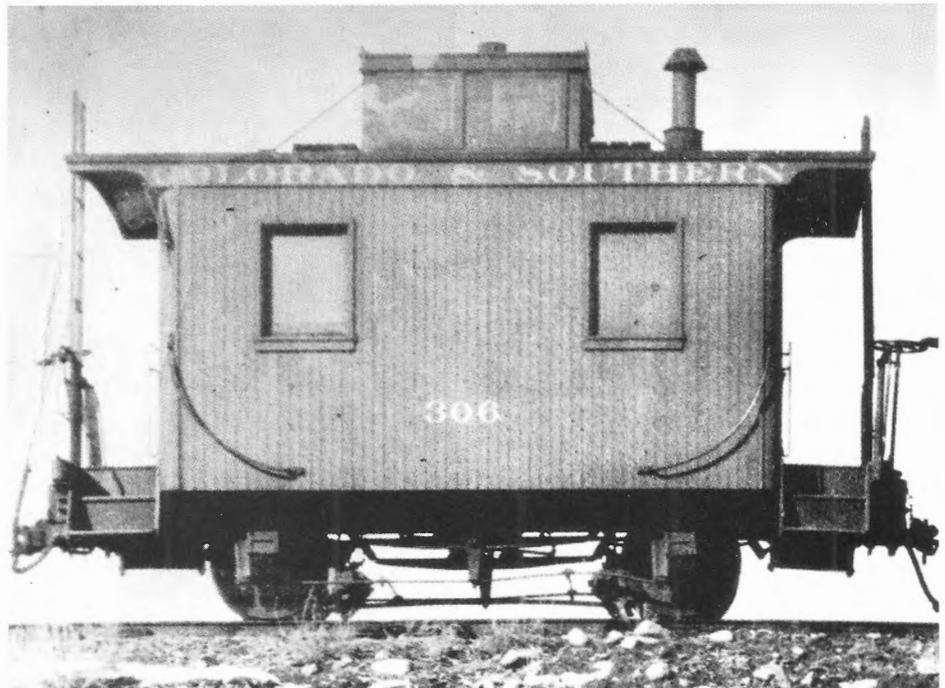
Relettering engines, coaches, and cabooses became a priority. In a very early view of a C&S caboose, crews had painted out the old lettering even before the new scheme was ready. Apparently cars ran around for a short time with only numbers for identification. The first car the railroad renumbered was 1500. On September 12, 1899, it became C&S 303. By the end of the year, UPD&G 63 and DL&G 1507, 1513, 1514, and 1518 had become 302, 306, 309, 310, and 313 respectively. By the end of the following year, all but 1503 had received new numbers. That car became 304 in May,

1902. In the meantime, 1508 received a new number on June 2, 1900 then, the following September, crashed at Pittsburg (Mill?). It was the first car the railroad had lost in nearly seven years. It is interesting how many cars the UP had lost by comparison even though the rolling stock was much newer then.

A C&S EIGHT WHEEL CABOOSE

Some historians suspect caboose 302 of having four axles. Clues support that notion. On page 300 of M.C. Poor's *D,SP&P, Memorial Edition*, a photo of

*Photo 1. 306 was formerly DL&G 1507. 310 was reportedly identical because both underwent rebuilding at the same time in the mid 1890s. Notice the small windows, straight end ladders, and lateral roofwalks at both ends of the cupola. Also note the diagonal brace rods off the corners of the cupola. The suspension on 306 was that of an original South Park caboose*



AUTHOR'S COLLECTION

such a car may occur. UPD&G 1782 came to the narrow gauge from the standard gauge. It was first an outfit car, then became caboose 1782, still standard gauge. Finally, by January, 1896, it became narrow gauge caboose 1782. The UPD&G renumbered it 63 in 1898 and the C&S gave it number 302. Caboose 302 is further intriguing because, as a C&S car, it continued to move from one capacity to another. In March, 1905, it became Outfit 087 although some records suggest it first had number 0302 and only received 087 a few years later. At that point, it may have become some kind of boxcar. Documents from 1916 indicate 087 was a paint car for the Bridge & Building Department. Apparently the shops had fitted it with United States safety appliances by September, 1918. The C&S finally scrapped it in February, 1928.

COUPLERS AND AIR BRAKES

Congress initially enacted the United States Safety Appliances Act in 1893. Railroadng was a very dangerous occupation and the bill's purpose was to make railroads adopt certain appliances and fixtures to reduce the possibility of hazard. The



AUTHOR'S COLLECTION

**Photo 2.** The unidentified caboose in this July, 1912 wreck may be the earliest example of a rebuilt C&S caboose. The end ladder has straight frames and the roof ends have no lateral roofwalks.

government periodically would amend the act by requiring additional safety equipment. Each time that happened, the railroads had five years to comply. The Interstate Commerce Commission enforced the laws.

In 1899, Congress amended the USSA act requiring, among other things, railroads to replace link and pin couplers with Janney style automatic knuckle couplers. The majority of C&S narrow gauge equipment had changed to knuckle couplers by 1903. C&S records indicate the cabooses had received Washburn couplers.

About the same time, the government added a new set of requirements. The ICC decided all cars should have automatic airbrakes. The narrow gauge cabooses had never had airbrakes. The DL&G January, 1899 Annual Report to the ICC clearly indicated none of its twelve cars had airbrakes. The amendment was to have a very telling effect upon them.

The four wheel bobbars still had their original suspension and running gear and it was incompatible with the C&S airbrake system. The railroads had used a form of that brake system since late in 1883 when the UP installed Westinghouse automatic airbrakes on most South Park equipment. The UPD&G had been upgrading that system on DL&G and its own freight cars since the late 1890s and all new equipment

received the modern system as a matter of course. Yet, until the railroad replaced the suspension on its cabooses, they continued to use only handbrakes.

The cabooses soon would have airbrakes

**Photo 3.** Another view of the car in Photo 2. The lateral roofwalks next to the cupola are similar to those on 306 in Photo 1. A rod brace is visible off the corner of the cupola. There is no roofwalk along the length of the cupola.

AUTHOR'S COLLECTION



but only after considerable modification. As Photo 1 indicates, the old suspension included equalizer bars and cross braces making it very difficult to adapt the brakes. The answer was to upgrade the undercarriage sometime between 1903 and 1907 so crews could install and maintain the modern brakes.

#### MAJOR REBUILDING 1908-1916

The general evolution of C&S caboose superstructures appears to go something like this: Sometime in the mid-1890s, the DL&G rebuilt two cars with center cupolas. All other cars remained much the same in appearance until the C&S rebuilt them. The key features of those two cars were smaller side windows, end ladders with straight up and down frames, and a brace rod from each upper corner of the lookouts' diagonal to the tops of the roofs. DL&G 1500, apparently from the Utah & Northern, also had a center cupola and shared all the above features except one; it had large side windows similar to those on original South Park cars. As time passed, the shops placed lateral roofwalks in front of and behind the cupolas, from the main roofwalk to the cars' edges. But the lateral roofwalks

never connected to each other down the sides of the cupola. The three cars with cupolas had ladders on the right side of the end platforms, never on the left. The first cars the C&S rebuilt also appear to have had that distinction.

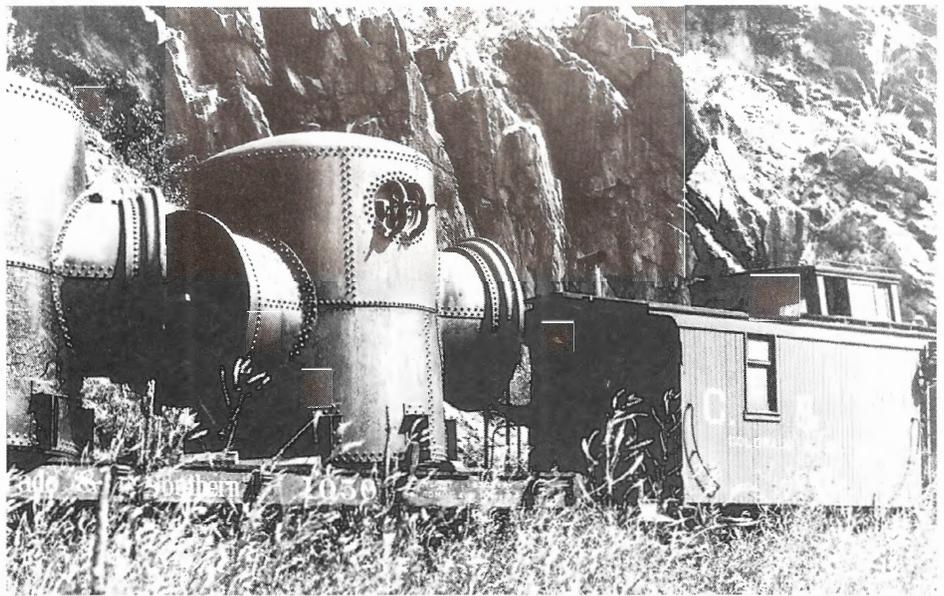
Another feature distinguishing pre-rebuilds from all but the first rebuilds were the straight vertical ladder frames. That continued with the first few cars the C&S rebuilt. But there was a break in the rebuilding and, when the railroad resumed, the ladder style changed to loops in the top of the frames. At that point, they moved to the left side of the end platforms. The railroad also began to connect the lateral walks in front of the cupola to those behind with a walk down the sides of the lookout. But by the time they rebuilt the last cars, lateral roofwalks had moved from the cupola to the ends of the roof next to the ladders where they belonged—to comply to ICC regulations. Thus the company discontinued roofwalks along the sides of the lookouts.

The lookouts on all cars before the C&S rebuild were at the center of the roof. All rebuilt cars except 303 received lookouts on one end of the roof. That may have absorbed less interior space than a center location. Since 303 was larger than the others, the space problem may have been too insignificant for the railroad to change it. It was the only car the C&S rebuilt with a center cupola. Other large cars had no cupolas in the first place. Finally, side windows became smaller and often fewer after the rebuildings and, after the first few cars, the modern cupolas lacked the diagonal braces on pre-rebuilt lookouts.

When the C&S rebuilt the cabooses undercarriages for automatic airbrakes, they left the old bodies intact. That soon would change. In 1908, the car shops drew up a plan to rebuild the caboose bodies. That plan completely ignored the undercarriage. The 1908 plan called for a cupola on one end along with other improvements such as roofwalks, end ladders with straight frames, and smaller side windows.

#### DIFFERENT REBUILDING PERIODS

As we have seen, the railroad rebuilt the cabooses gradually. Several differences exist between the 1908 drawing and cars in later photos. Some rebuilt cars had features found not only on the drawing but also on



DENVER WATER BOARD PHOTO, AUTHOR'S COLLECTION

*Photo 4. Somebody from the Denver Water Board took this photo six days after Photos 2 and 3. 1007 appears to be in brand new condition. Some historians think it was the first rebuilt caboose but the differences between 1007, the car in photos 2 and 3, and the drawing in Figure 1 make it clear the C&S already had rebuilt at least one car well before 1007. Note the ladder on the far end has looped frames, the roofwalk down the length of the cupola, and the position of the ladders in all four photos. 1007 is more modern than the other two cars.*

pre-rebuilt cars with cupolas. They were the first cars the railroad rebuilt. Other cars appear to depart from the plan in minor details. One example is the style of end ladder. Such clues nearly always indicate a passage of time between projects. Another hint is in C&S folio number 27. As near as I can tell, that document was from around 1911 when the C&S devised a renumbering scheme that included cabooses. The document indicates several cars were still in a pre-rebuilt condition and all appeared with both their old and new numbers. On the other hand, the sheet for 1007 omits the car's old number but does show the shops rebuilt 1007! We might conclude, then, that between 1908 and 1912, the C&S rebuilt a few cars at its leisure. But something happened in 1912 to change that. The ICC again stepped in with new regulations and suddenly caboose rebuilding was no longer an option. In fact several events took place with very significant consequences for the cabooses and the railroad's plans to rebuild them.

#### THE CB&Q AND THE ICC

In 1908, the Chicago, Burlington & Quincy gained control of the C&S and the

best friend the South Park ever had, Frank Trumbull, left the company. The C&S attitude toward the narrow gauge immediately changed for the worse. In 1910, the company permanently closed the Alpine tunnel and refused to repair the washed out mainline through Trout Creek Canyon. It also closed Boreas pass with every intention of abandonment until, in 1913, the Breckenridge Chamber of Commerce went to court to force the railroad to reopen the line. The South Park mainline quickly had reduced by half. To make matters worse, the State economy declined, meaning less rail traffic. Suddenly the C&S found itself with a surplus of rolling stock, including cabooses. As we have seen, the shops had yet to rebuild most cabooses at that point.

To add to the confusion, in 1912 Congress again amended the USSA. The new laws directly affected cabooses because they required roofwalk improvements. Nowhere does a bobber without a cupola appear with a roofwalk and end ladders. But, because of the new laws, I suspect the C&S added roofwalks and end ladders to a few cars without cupolas between 1912 and 1917 if only to keep them within compliance. At any rate, the railroad no longer could rebuild cabooses at its leisure be-

cause it had to comply with the USSA laws within a certain time. Indeed, the railroad had to put its entire freight car fleet through the shops and there was little enough time to do that. Between a negative attitude toward the narrow gauge, trisecting the mainline, and the overload in the car shops, the environment surrounding South Park cabooses became somewhat hostile.

By 1917, the year the grace period ended for compliance with the new laws, the C&S had shopped most of the cabooses. After 1917, the railroad compiled several lists of cars in violation of the law; no caboose appears on any of those lists. Apparently the shops managed either to rebuild the cabooses or to scrap them before the deadline. The railroad did scrap three cars. I think that was because they were surplus, in poor condition, and time had run out.

As the chart indicates, between February and June 1912, the C&S painted new numbers on twelve surviving cabooses. In 1915, it scrapped 1001 and 1010 and, in January, 1917, scrapped 1011.

## CONCLUSION

The changes to C&S cabooses during the first twenty years were nothing short of metamorphic. Cupolas were the most obvious new feature. They sat on one end because the cars were so small. Center cupolas tended to dominate what little room was available for the crews' comfort. Roofwalks became standard. In some cases, as with 1007, they circumvented the sides of the cupola. With the roofwalk came end ladders on the left side of the platform of most rebuilt cars but always on the right side of cars in their original configuration. The running gear also was new. The spider webs of swaybars and cross braces disappeared. Each pedestal received independent springs; that undoubtedly improved the ride. The pedestals bore a striking resemblance to those on passenger trucks. Automatic airbrakes accompanied the new undercarriage. The equipment was the most modern the C&S had at the time. Finally, the shops installed new windows almost certainly because cupolas changed the interior layout. The new windows were considerably smaller than the originals and, in many cases, a caboose had only one per side.

Other features remained the same. For instance, cars with rounded corners kept them even after undergoing a rebuild. By the time the C&S acquired the cars, all had arched grab irons on the sides and inverted "L" grab irons on the ends. They remained. Perhaps most important to those of us who find South Park cabooses so endearing, all retained the essence of their diminutive appearance—two axles and four wheels.

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**Drawings:** C&S Folio No. 27, John W. Maxwell

**Volumes:** Memorial Edition Denver, South Park & Pacific by M. C. Poor, Rocky Mountain Railroad Club; Official Railway Equipment Registers, various volumes June 1885-1943.

*Figure 1. The date on this drawing is June 22, 1908. Compare it with the photos.*

