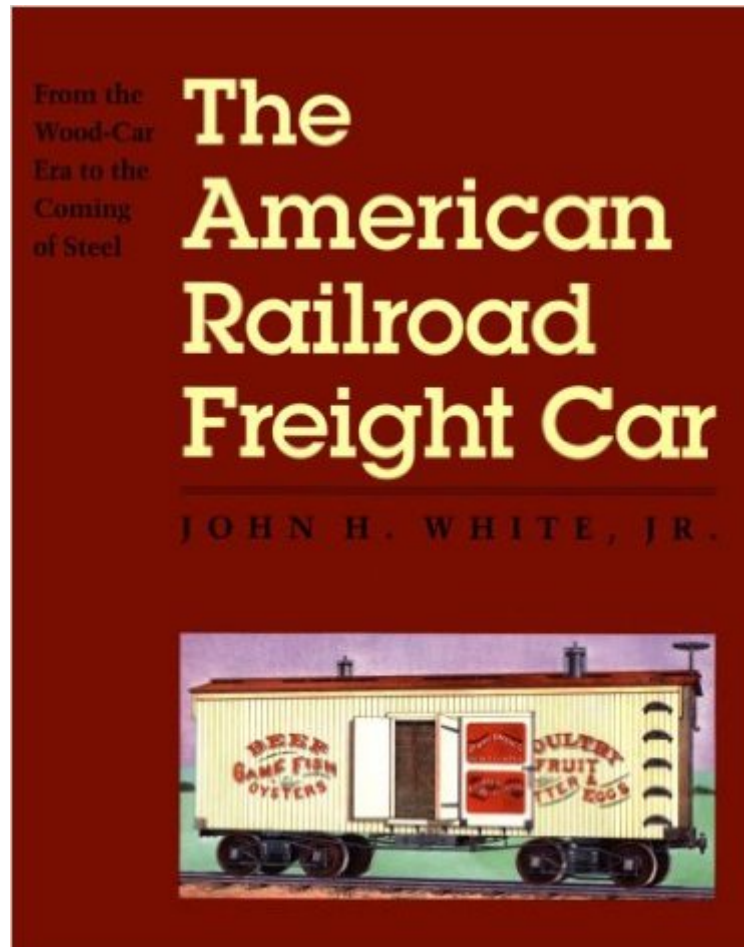


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# The American Railroad Freight Car: From The Wood-Car Era To The Coming Of Steel



## Synopsis

• From the former Curator of Transportation at the Smithsonian Institution • Illustrated with 530 photographs, drawings, and engravings • Includes plans, diagrams, and detailed specifications for model-builders • 665 oversized pages in a handsomely jacketed hardcover or specially priced paperback edition

In this sequel to his best-selling *American Railroad Passenger Car*, John White forever changes the freight car's lowly image. Including hundreds of historical photographs and detailed blueprints, *The American Railroad Freight Car* establishes the sophistication and expertise that marked the development of freight cars in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Along with an overview of freight transportation's historical importance, White offers detailed accounts of technological developments and examines lesser known aspects of everyday freight service such as yard management, train operations, and the origins of the interchange system.

## Book Information

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Average Customer Review: 5.0 out of 5 stars • See all reviews • (14 customer reviews)

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## Customer Reviews

My god! This is the definitive tome on the freight car. How thrilled I am after all these years to have a singular reference work to which I can go for scholarly and "in the trenches" notes on everything from nuts and bolts to the wheels, frames, cabins, and hardware of all kinds of freight cars, including rare, rare photos of beautiful cars, perfectly evolved to their purposes. John White is an engaging writer, and in *The American Railroad Freight Car*, he brings a mundane subject with a prosaic title to life and fills it with the sounds of cattle, the loading of coal, the sloshing of liquids in vertical and horizontal tanks, and the voices of those working around them, sometimes incredulous with the fact

that a design works at all, sometimes admonishing "i told you so" that it wouldn't work, and sometimes thrilled to be working on a state-of-the-art railcar. This was in the 1830s to the 1930s, roughly. Another book is sorely needed from roughly 1910 to 2015. White's attention to detail may set a standard for railroad writing. For example White doesn't merely tell us that the link & pin coupler was dangerous and flawed, so it was replaced by the Janney Automatic coupler after a Congressional mandate to standardize an automatic coupler that would not kill people. That much you can read anywhere. White explains that in 1893 there were 11,710 coupler incidents were reported by the ICC, and inventors all over the world knew that whoever's patent got chosen would become rich and famous almost overnight. It was the contest of contests. Within a few years, there were 6500 patents for "automatic couplers," some of which may have worked, but which all together comprised over 1% of all US patents ever issued.

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