

Southern 70-ton 52 ft. 6 in. Insulated Box Cars Built by Fruit Growers Express Co.

Southern 70-ton 52 ft. 6 in. SCUF Insulated Box Cars 650-899, NCP-177

SCUF Insulated Box Cars 201-299 and 585000-585199, NCP-188

CUF Insulated Box Cars 585200-585699, NCP-201

SCUF Insulated Box Cars 100-299 and 585000-585199, NCP-201-A

CUF Insulated Box Cars 584824-584999, NCP-211 and NCP-212

CUF Insulated Box Cars 585700-585923, NCP-211-A

The Fruit Growers Express Co. built all of the Southern's 50' 70-ton, CUF and SCUF insulated box cars under New Car Programs NCP-177 (1977), NCP-188 (1978), NCP-201 and 201-A (1979) and NCP-211/212 and 211-A (1980). All were basically the same design with different cushion underframe arrangements, insulation thickness and interior dimensions.

NCP-177-SCUF Insulated Box Cars 650-899

NCP-177, cars 650-899 were the first Southern insulated box cars purchased, not leased, from Fruit Growers Co. in Alexandria, VA. They were built in 1977 to Fruit Grower's Specification 412-1-D and carried a final base price of \$40,500 per car. Before selecting Fruit Growers for the program, Southern received quotes from Southern Iron & Equipment, PC&F and Fruit Growers and "no bids" from AC&F, Pullman-Standard, FMC and BFF. The new cars followed two groups of insulated (Specification F-157) box cars Southern purchased from Pullman-Standard in 1962 and 63 (cars 500-569 and 570-649).

The cars were built with 20" travel Keystone Shock Control Model 70-SA-20MS hydraulic cushioning devices in frames built by Greenville Steel Car Co. Sides and doors were constructed by Youngstown Steel Door Co. Stanray provided the roofs and ends. The NCP-177 sample car was inspected on July 14, 1977.

All NCP-177 cars were delivered from July 22 through August 22, 1977 and moved, free, by the Southern to the Milwaukee Road, Louisville, KY to be accepted by "an agent of Miller Brewing" to avoid Virginia State Sales Tax. For rail cars built under a Southern Purchase Order, the Southern being a Virginia Corporation, and thus not subject to State sales tax, delivering Virginia built cars lettered for a Virginia based Corporation to a third party in Kentucky does not appear to make much sense.

The unusual delivery arrangement was due to the ownership and leasing arrangements for these cars. They were paid for by GATX Leasing Corp. with the Miller Brewing Co. as the lessee with the right to sublease the cars to the Chicago, Milwaukee St. Paul & Pacific (The Milwaukee Road).

As Miller began production at a new Eden, NC brewery, the cars' service would be shifted from Miller's Milwaukee facility to Eden and Southern would assume the lease ("Substitute Lessee" according to the paperwork).

Fruit Growers Express 28-D-78 May 4, 1977

Of all of the thousands of Southern freight car drawings in the SRHA Archives, those drawn by Fruit Growers and Magor Car Co. are remarkable because of their consistent poor quality. Fruit Growers drawing 28-D-78 "Lettering Arrangement Southern Railway" is the only drawing from any of the insulated box car NCPs that is a candidate to be published because it is "less bad" than any of the others. It shows the standard Southern Railway box car stencil scheme adapted to these cars.



Southern 763 and NCP-177 cousin 795 are passing through Roanoke, VA on They are both from the first order of insulated box cars built by Fruit Growers for the Southern.