

Itinerary Cards

A simple operating alternative to modeling railroad paperwork

By

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Why Itinerary Cards?

- I wanted a simple way to have operating sessions without doing all the paperwork a real railroad does.
 - Simple for me to use for 1-person sessions
 - Simple to use for friends to operate with minimal training and hassle

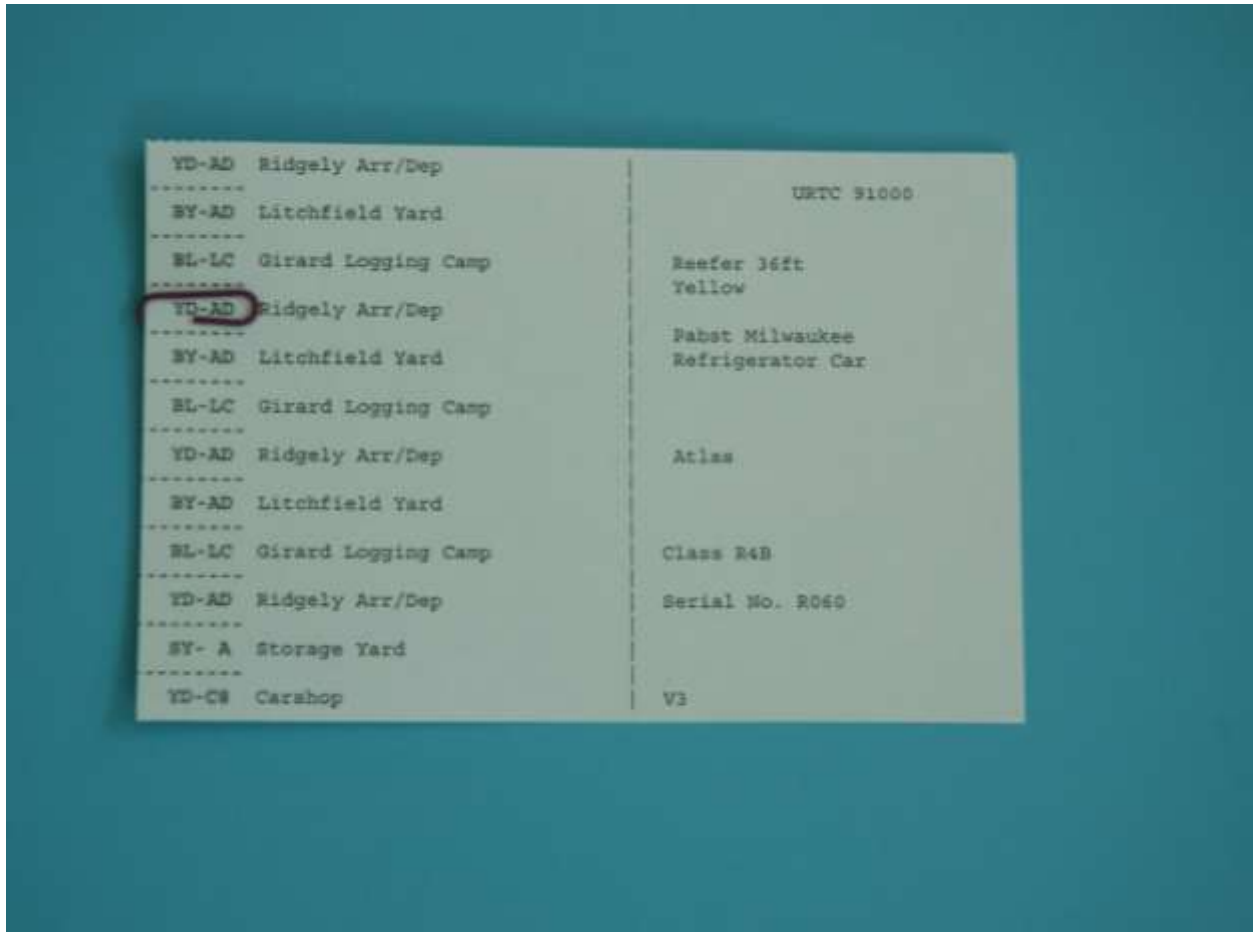
What is an Itinerary Card?

- An index card which contains a list of destinations for a car.
- It has attached a physical pointer indicating the car's current location (or point of origin while in transit to the next destination).
- When a car is spotted at an industry the pointer is moved to indicate the car's location.

How can you make Itinerary Cards?

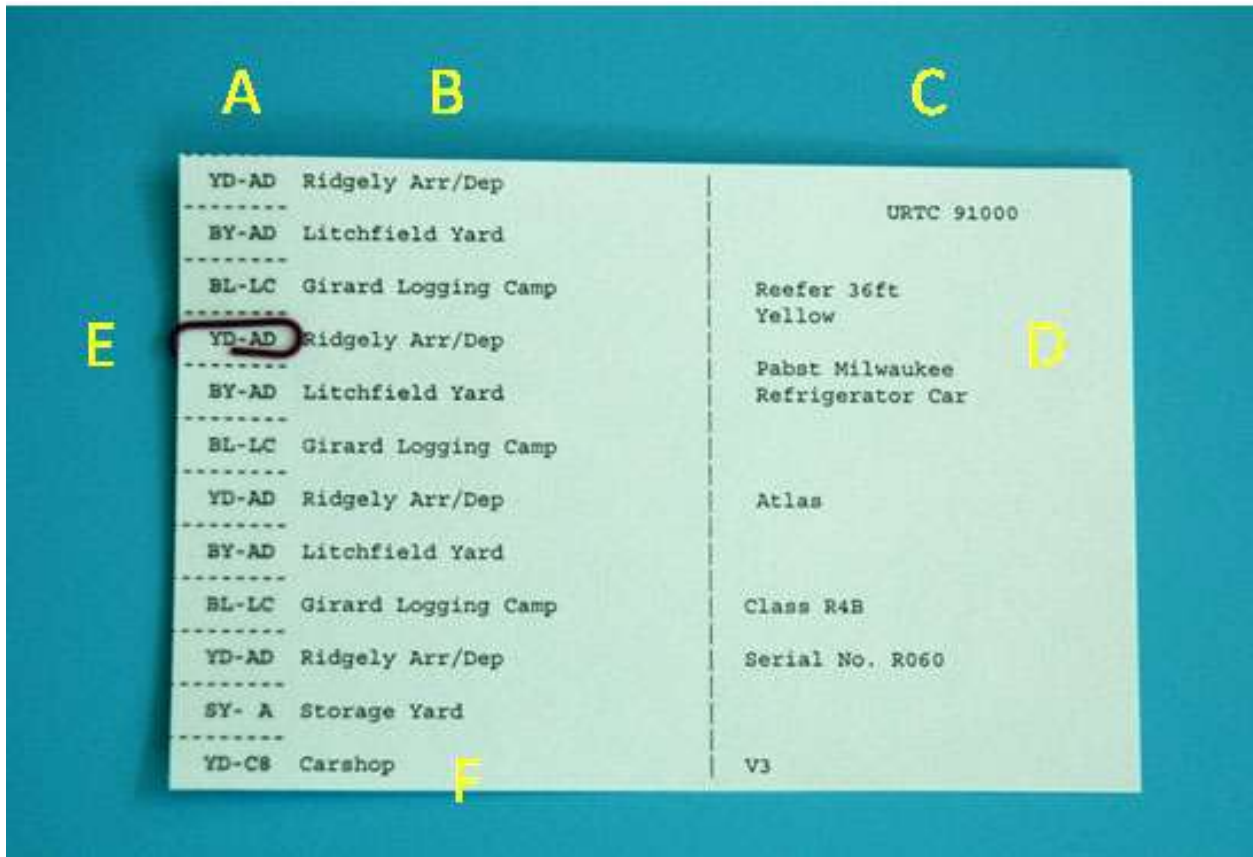
- Write them out by hand on index cards.
- Type them on index cards.
- Use a word processor on a computer to type them and print them.
- Use software on a computer to generate and print them.

An Itinerary Card



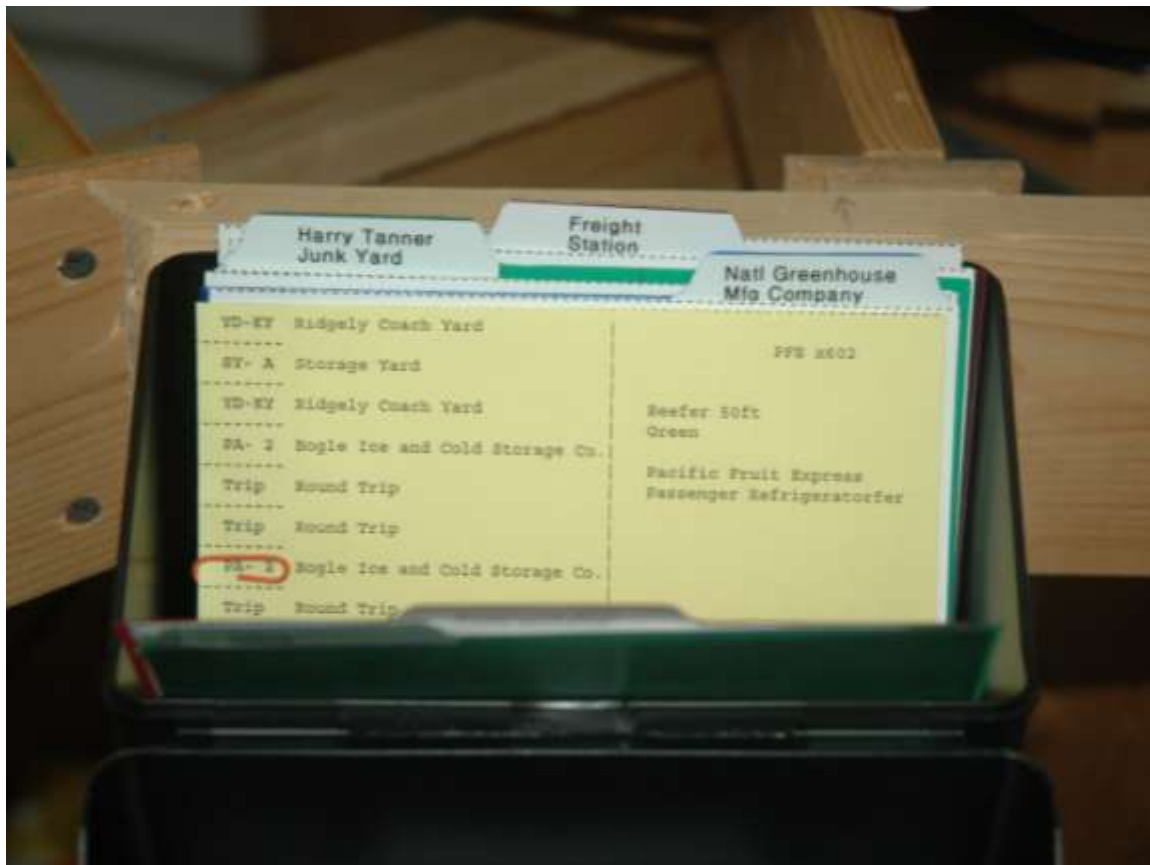
Itinerary card for a Pabst beer reefer that makes frequent trips to assuage the thirst of thirsty lumberjacks.

Features of an Itinerary Card



- A. Locations and track numbers
- B. Destination names
- C. Car identification
- D. Other information about the car
- E. A pointer indicating the car's current or recently past location
- F. A mandatory stop at the Car Shop for routine inspection and maintenance

A Box of Itinerary Cards at a Switching Area



- Box is located convenient to the switching area
- Each tab represents one track at an industry

Simple Rules for using Itinerary Cards – 1

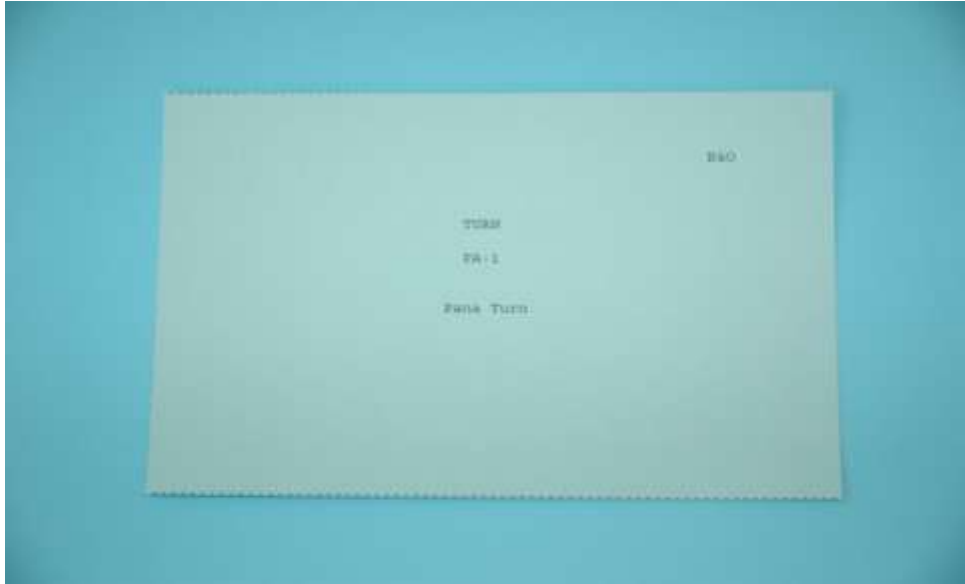
- When an engineer is assigned a train he is given a deck of Itinerary cards for that train
 - Cover card indicating the type of train
 - Engine card – contains engine's DCC address
 - Car cards – one card for each car
 - Caboose card (for freight trains)
- When the train returns to the yard the card deck must also return to the yard with the cards in the order of the cars in the train

A Deck of Cards for a Train



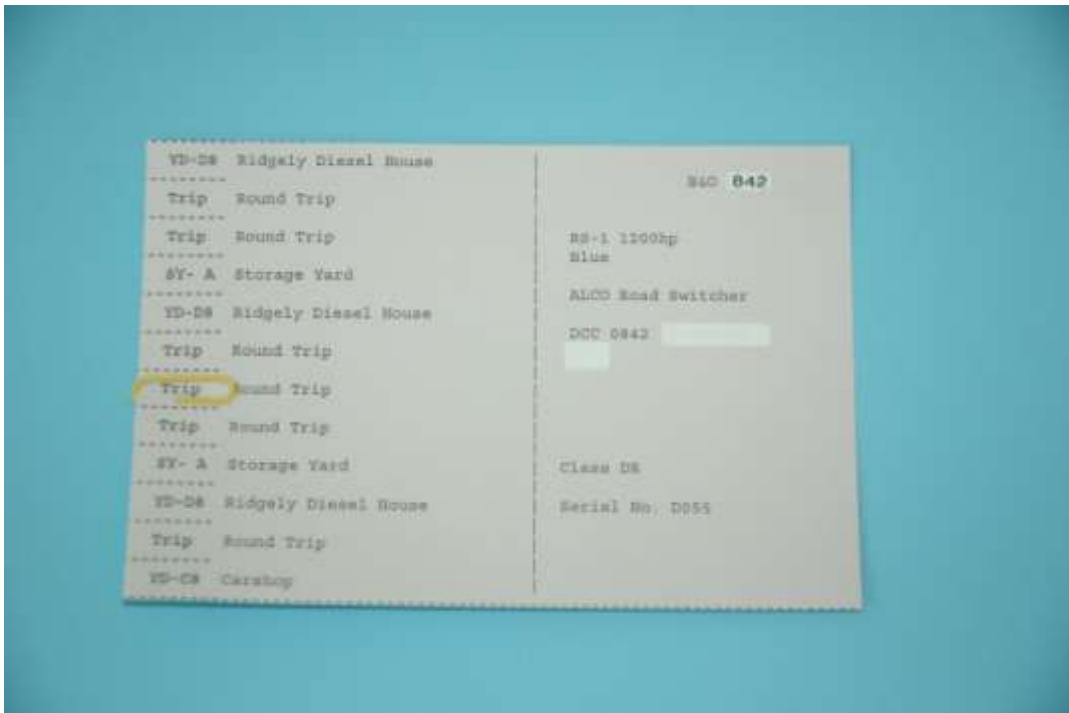
Train Type Cover Card

Sample of a cover card indicating the type of train



Engine Card

Card containing information about the engine assigned to the train



Caboose Card

Card for the caboose assigned to the train



Simple Rules for using Itinerary Cards – 2

- At a switching area
 - When a car is spotted, move the pointer and put the card into the box right behind the divider
 - Pull the last card behind the divider – this is your pickup to switch into your train. Make sure the reporting marks on the car match your card!!
- On the high iron
 - Keep the cards in the deck in the same order as the cars in the train

How do I make Itinerary Cards for my layout?

- I have three programs to generate the card information, audit it, and print the cards from it.
- The card generator picks cars from a database of equipment information. For each car, it picks routes from a file of legal routes for each car routing class and generates a partial itinerary. It repeats this until the card is full.

Summary

- Itinerary Cards provide structure for an operating session without the bother of trying to simulate all of the paperwork of a real railroad.
- Itinerary Cards are simple in concept, so that the learning time for new operators can be relatively short.
- Generation of Itinerary Cards can be automated.