



*Budd fluting of the 1953-1964 period on Chair Car No. 2823. Roof fluting immediately identifies this as a Budd car. Photo by Dennis Kogan.*

hind a Jersey Central GP40P on page 36 of the February, 1975, issue of "Trains." If you've got that issue, count the flutes.

With the Budd construction of the 1948-1950 period, the large rib running along the base of the roof line defining the juncture of the roof and the letterboard was eliminated. This resulted in an unbroken continuum of the ribs running across the roof all the way down to the windows on both sides of the car. Examples of this fluting arrangement are represented in the 1550-1565 series Lunch Counter Dining Cars and in the "Pine" series sleeping cars.

The last variation in Budd fluting arrangement appeared in 1953. With this final variation, the ribbing in the letterboard area was eliminated resulting in a smooth letterboard. This fluting arrangement is best exemplified in the 2816-2860 series chair cars outshopped in 1953. And this arrangement was also a

salient feature of all head-end cars constructed by Budd for the Santa Fe subsequent to 1953.

So, as you can see, there is quite a bit more to passenger car siding than just the simple determination that the car is "smooth-side" or "fluted-side." And it is up to us, as truly "prototype modelers" to strive to recreate, as faithfully as possible, these nuances of fluting in the passenger car models we build. If we did so, the believability of our finished models would be greatly enhanced.

Unfortunately, it is nearly impossible at this time with what is available in the market, to consummate such perfection. It has always been a dream of mine that someone or some company would produce styrene sheets, preferably 12 inches square, of prototypical Budd, Pullman, and ribbed fluting in HO scale. The scratch-building possibilities would be almost limitless. If such a product were

available, I would probably buy myself a few pounds of the stuff, and become a recluse scratch-building everything on the roster. I have often mused, and with great frustration, that when there are at least a half dozen varieties of brick available in sheet form, why can't there also be available these three basic fluting styles? (*The answer to this lies in the fact that to produce fluting would require a different material and a different manufacturing process and significantly more expensive tooling. ED*)

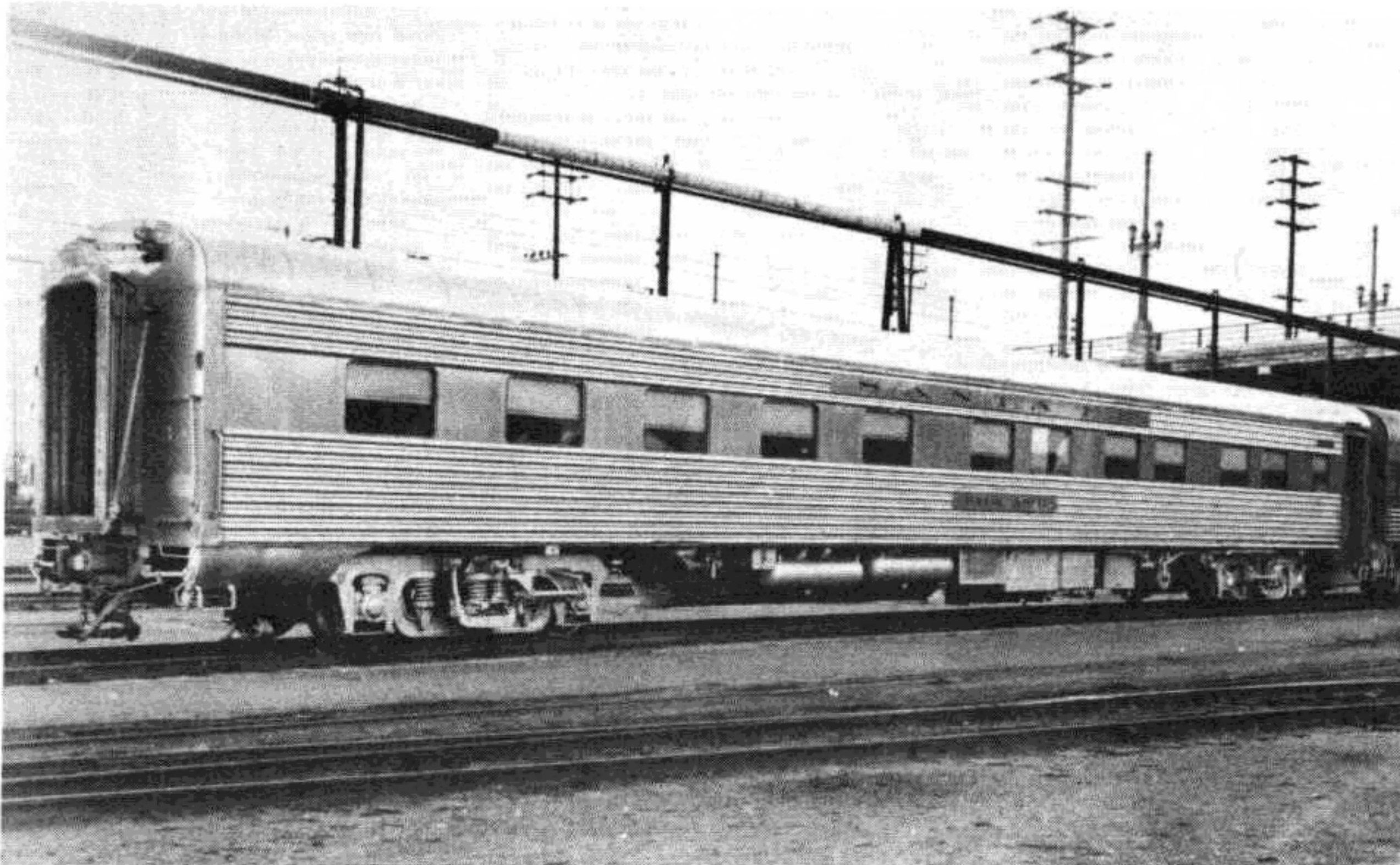
Until that golden day when such a product becomes available, if indeed there will ever be such a day, we must content ourselves with using the fluting that is presently available on the various passenger car kits in the market today. And this is a sad compromise.

Athearn's passenger car kits have correct Budd fluting, but the cars are shorties, and nowhere on any of them can one obtain enough continuous fluting to utilize in scratch-building full-length passenger cars.

Con-Cor's fluting is much too coarse to represent anything prototype. In addition, where prototype fluting is actually a series of narrow ridges with shallow depressions in between, Con-Cor's fluting is a series of narrow depressions with broad ridges in between. It is sort of like looking at true fluting from the inside out.

And for prototype Pullman fluting, the fluting on Herkimer cars, which I understand are being re-introduced, most closely resembles it. But Herkimer cars are aluminum, and aluminum is not the easiest material to scratch-build with.

The fluting on Lambert cars is really not fluting at all. But rather, if Lambert cars were enlarged to prototype size, the "fluting" would appear as individual flat stringers attached to the side of the car. But, I must admit, on the model, the effect is good.



*ACF style fluting on Sleeping Car "Palm Arch." This photo, by Dennis Kogan, again illustrates the differences in the fluting used on cars of the manufacturers used by the Santa Fe in procuring lightweight cars. Each has its own distinctive characteristics and more than indicates slight difference; it can tell much more about the car and its history than anyone not familiar with it would ever expect.*