

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form**

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Kansas City Southern Railway Caboose #383
other names/site number Site #BE3237

2. Location

street & number Northwest of the AR 72 and AR 59 intersection not for publication
city or town Gravette vicinity
state Arkansas code AR county Benton code 007 zip code 72736

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this nomination
request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic
Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set for in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property meets
does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant
 nationally statewide locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title Date
Arkansas Historic Preservation Program
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. (See Continuation sheet for additional
comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:
 entered in the National Register.
 See continuation sheet
 determined eligible for the
National Register.
 See continuation sheet
 determined not eligible for the
National Register.
 removed from the National
Register.
 other, (explain:) _____

Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(Check as many boxes as apply)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

Category of Property
(Check only one box)

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Number of Resources within Property
(Do not include previously listed resources in count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
_____	_____	buildings
_____	_____	sites
1	_____	structures
_____	_____	objects
1	_____	Total

Name of related multiple property listing
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

Number of Contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

TRANSPORTATION/rail-related/caboose

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

VACANT/NOT IN USE

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

N/A

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation N/A
walls N/A

roof N/A
other STEEL

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- A** Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B** Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C** Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D** Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- A** owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B** removed from its original location.
- C** birthplace or grave of a historical figure of outstanding importance.
- D** a cemetery.
- E** a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F** a commemorative property
- G** less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Levels of Significance (local, state, national)

Local

Areas of Significance (Enter categories from instructions)

Engineering

Transportation

Period of Significance

1952-1960

Significant Dates

1952

Significant Person (Complete if Criterion B is marked)

Cultural Affiliation (Complete if Criterion D is marked)

Architect/Builder

Kansas City Southern Railway, Builder

Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- Previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State Agency
- Federal Agency
- Local Government
- University
- Other

Name of repository: _____

10. Geographical Data

Acreege of Property Less than one.

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1	<u>15</u>	<u>369678</u>	<u>4031715</u>	3	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
2	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	4	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Ralph S. Wilcox, National Register & Survey Coordinator
organization Arkansas Historic Preservation Program date May 19, 2010
street & number 1500 Tower Building, 323 Center Street telephone (501) 324-9787
city or town Little Rock state AR zip code 72201

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

- A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location
- A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.

Additional items

(Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items.)

Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of SHPO or FPO.)

name City of Gravette
street & number 604 First Avenue, SE telephone
city or town Gravette state AR zip code 72736

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listing. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 *et seq.*)

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P. O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20303.

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SUMMARY

Kansas City Southern Railway Caboose #383 is a bay-window caboose built by the Louisiana and Arkansas Railroad (part of Kansas City Southern) in June 1952. The caboose was operated by the Kansas City Southern until it was given to the City of Gravette and brought to Gravette in 1991. The caboose was then placed on display immediately to the east of the Kansas City Southern railroad line. Caboose #383 was one of eleven cabooses built by the railroad (#380-390) in 1952.

ELABORATION

The general specifications for the Kansas City Southern Railway Caboose #383 are as follows:

Make: Kansas City Southern bay-window caboose.

Builder: Louisiana and Arkansas Railroad (part of Kansas City Southern).

Length: 50'8".

Width: 11'3½".

Height: 13'3⅛".

Weight: 55,900 lbs.

Kansas City Southern Railway Caboose #383 is a bay-window caboose built by the Louisiana and Arkansas Railroad (part of Kansas City Southern) in June 1952. Whereas most cabooses had a cupola on top to allow the crew to keep an eye on the train, the bay-window caboose had bay windows projecting from the sides to allow a view of the train ahead. Caboose #383 operated on the Kansas City Southern tracks, which linked Kansas City, Missouri, and the Gulf Coast at Port Arthur, Texas, and Lake Charles and New Orleans, Louisiana. The caboose is built on a steel underframe with a wood-lined steel superstructure. The four-wheel trucks of the caboose have 33" diameter wheels, and the caboose is equipped with air brakes and hand brakes.

Integrity

Kansas City Southern Railway Caboose #383 possesses good integrity. As is normal practice with railroad equipment, parts of the caboose have been replaced and repaired. The replacement parts and materials, however, have been compatible with the original materials and the caboose today still reflects the 1952 construction diagram.

Kansas City Southern Railway Caboose #383 currently resides approximately 35 feet east of the Kansas City Southern railroad line. The caboose sits on a short section of track in the location of a former spur off of the

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original Kansas City Southern rail line. Additionally, the spur appears on the 1971 USGS topographic map, indicating that it was in place while the caboose was in service. As a result, their current setting still reflects Kansas City Southern Railway Caboose #383's period of significance while it was in operation on the Kansas City Southern in the Gravette area.

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SUMMARY

Kansas City Southern Railway Caboose #383 is being nominated to the National Register of Historic Places with **local significance** under **Criterion C** for its engineering as a rare and intact example of a Kansas City Southern bay-window caboose from the #380-390 series remaining in Arkansas. The caboose was an important workhorse in freight service on the Kansas City Southern for many years until it was retired and eventually brought to Gravette. As a result, it is therefore eligible for nomination under **Criterion A** for its association with the role of railroad transportation in Arkansas.

HISTORY OF THE PROPERTY

Although the first railroad line in the United States was laid in the late 1820s, very little railroad construction was completed in Arkansas prior to the Civil War. The Memphis & Little Rock Railroad, which had laid some track westward from Hopefield and eastward from Little Rock, and the Mississippi, Ouachita, & Red River, which had laid a few miles of track inland from Chicot and Arkansas City, were the only railroads to complete any construction prior to 1860.¹

The Civil War, however, delayed the building of railroads by a decade, and it was not until the 1870s that railroad building took off again. The St. Louis, Iron Mountain & Southern built a line south from St. Louis to the Arkansas border. They wanted to go to Texas, and purchased the Cairo & Fulton. Although the Cairo & Fulton had not done any construction, they had secured rights-of-way prior to the Civil War. The St. Louis, Iron Mountain & Southern reached Little Rock by 1872, and had completed the first line across Arkansas when it reached Texarkana in 1874.²

The second railroad line to reach across the state incorporated the Memphis & Little Rock Railroad, and the newly constructed Little Rock & Fort Smith, which had reached the coal fields of Clarksville in 1874 and Fort Smith five years later. The Little Rock & Fort Smith was purchased by Jay Gould (who already owned the Iron Mountain lines) in 1882, and became part of the Iron Mountain system – the largest railroad system in the state in the late nineteenth-century.³

The history of the Kansas City Southern began in 1890 when Arthur Stilwell began construction of the Kansas City, Pittsburg & Gulf Railroad, which was meant to carry grain from the Kansas City area to the Gulf of Mexico. He chose a route that went as directly south as possible, and the line was completed to Port Arthur, Texas, a town that Stilwell also built, in 1897. However, within two years the railroad was in

¹ West, Elliott. *The WPA Guide to 1930s Arkansas*. Lawrence, KS: University Press of Kansas, 1987 reprint of 1941 publication p. 54.

² *Ibid.*

³ West, p. 55.

receivership.⁴ The receivership of the Kansas City, Pittsburg & Gulf was relatively short-lived, however, due

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to the discovery of oil in eastern Texas, which allowed shipments of grain to the south to be supplemented by shipments of oil and chemicals to the north. The railroad was reorganized as the Kansas City Southern and incorporated on March 19, 1900. During the same period, Leonor Loree, president of the Delaware & Hudson Railroad, was brought in to serve as chairman of the executive committee, a position that he held from 1906 until 1936.⁵

The Kansas City Southern line through the Gravette area was in place by the last half of the 1890s. The Kansas City Southern's main line entered the state north of Sulphur Springs in Benton County and then exited into Oklahoma southwest of Siloam Springs. The main line reentered the state near DeQueen in Sevier County in the southwest corner and then exited again southeast of Texarkana into Louisiana. A separate branch line went east from Spiro, Oklahoma, to Fort Smith.⁶

During the 1890s while the Kansas City, Pittsburg & Gulf Railroad was being built, two other railroads were coming into being that would figure in the history of the Kansas City Southern. Between 1896 and 1907 William Edenborn was building the Louisiana Railway & Navigation Company between New Orleans and Shreveport, Louisiana, a railroad that would follow the shortest route between the two cities. In 1923 the line was extended to McKinney, Texas, when Edenborn purchased a branch line of the Missouri-Kansas-Texas Railroad.⁷

At the same time that Edenborn was building the Louisiana Railway & Navigation Company, William Buchanan began a logging railroad in 1896. By 1906 it had become the Louisiana & Arkansas Railway with a line that stretched from Hope, Arkansas, to Alexandria, Louisiana. Another branch line went to Shreveport.⁸

The unification of the Louisiana Railway & Navigation Company, Louisiana & Arkansas Railway, and the Kansas City Southern in the first part of the twentieth century was the result of efforts by noted Arkansas businessman Harvey Couch. Ever since he was a young boy, he was fascinated with railroads, even building a couple of his own toy railroads.⁹ At one point during the 1920s, Couch told a Rotary group that, "...I truly believe that during the period from 1925 to 1940 we will see a greater development and expansion than

⁴ Drury, George H. *The Historical Guide to North American Railroads*. Milwaukee, WI: Kalmbach Books, 1985, p. 99.

⁵ *Ibid.*

⁶ *Rand McNally indexed county and township pocket map and shippers guide of Arkansas showing all railroad, cities, towns, villages, post offices, lakes, rivers, etc.* Map. Chicago: Rand McNally and Company, 1898.

⁷ *Ibid.*

⁸ *Ibid.*

⁹ Wilson, Wilton P. *Harvey Couch: The Master Builder*. Nashville: Broadman Press, 1947, p. 133.

during the period from the Civil War down to 1925...I am glad that I have an opportunity to live in this area and be a part of it.”¹⁰ Once his public utility empire was in place, Couch was then able to focus on his dream

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of having his own railroad, a perfect way to take advantage of the “greater development and expansion” that he anticipated coming to Arkansas.

Couch began the creation of his railroad empire in 1928 with the purchase of the Louisiana & Arkansas Railway, which was valued at more than \$7 million by the Interstate Commerce Commission, on February 10. By August 1928 he had acquired the Louisiana Railway & Navigation Company for \$17 million, bringing his railroad system to a total of 845 miles of track.¹¹ However, he was not finished, and set his sights on acquiring control of the Kansas City Southern.

The Kansas City Southern was the perfect railroad to add to Couch’s system since it would link Kansas City with the seaports of Beaumont, Texas, and New Orleans, and also because it was experiencing financial troubles by the 1930s. As a result, starting in 1937, Couch began acquiring stock in the Kansas City Southern, which was then under the control of a group of Dutch bankers in Amsterdam. After negotiating an agreement with the bankers, Couch assumed control of the railroad in 1938 and merged it with his Louisiana and Arkansas Company in 1939.¹²

Once Couch took control of the Kansas City Southern, he immediately began a process of overhauling the aging system. The overhaul of the line included purchasing new cars from the Pullman Company (while ordering that Pullman purchase their materials for the cars from within the Kansas City Southern service area) and acquiring new oil-electric (diesel) locomotives to allow faster train speeds.¹³ After Couch’s death in 1941, the upgrading of the railroad would continue under the leadership of Couch’s brother, C. P. “Pete” Couch, and William Neal Deramus during the 1940s and 1950s.¹⁴

It was no surprise that the upgrades to the Kansas City Southern in the late 1930s and early 1940s involved purchasing diesel locomotives. Many American railroads began using diesel powered locomotives on their lines during the period since they presented several advantages over steam locomotives. Diesel locomotives are able to start a heavy train from a standstill more quickly than a steam locomotive can. Additionally, diesel locomotives are ready to work at any time, and spend much less time out of service for service and repairs than do steam locomotives. They can also travel greater distances without stopping for fuel. The

¹⁰ Wilson, Stephen. *Harvey Couch: An Entrepreneur Brings Electricity to Arkansas*. Little Rock: August House, 1986, p. 90.

¹¹ Wilson, Stephen, p. 90.

¹² *Ibid*, p. 120.

¹³ *Ibid*.

¹⁴ “The Kansas City Southern Lines” found at http://www.kcshs.org/schedule/subs/images/history/kcs_hist.htm.

many advantages of diesel power would have been appealing to the Kansas City Southern, as they were to other railroads. The upgrades to the railroad's equipment was not limited to locomotives – railroad cars and cabooses were also upgraded continuing at least into the 1950s when the railroad built cabooses #380-#390.

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Although Kansas City Southern Railway locomotives would have hauled many types of freight cars during their time of service on the railroad, it is a given that the trains they would have pulled would have had cabooses, a standard feature on freight trains throughout much of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. The first caboose, which was quite primitive, appeared on a mixed passenger and freight train on the Auburn & Syracuse Railroad in the 1840s. It was the last boxcar on the train, but it was used by the conductor, Nat Williams, to store his tools and write his reports. However, the first known use of the word caboose in reference to a railroad car occurred in 1885 to refer to conductor's cars on the Buffalo, Corning, and New York line. The word "caboose" had its origins in several words, including the Dutch words *kabuis* and *kombuis*, the Swedish word *kabys* and the German word *kabuse*, each meaning "a little room or hut."¹⁵

In the early years of the Kansas City Southern, most of the cabooses used on the railroad were standard designs for the period. They featured the high cupola that allowed the conductors to see over the train ahead with the desk and bunks below. However, the railroad also experimented with bay-window cabooses, which did not have cupolas, but featured bay windows on each side to allow the conductors to watch the train ahead. Bay-window cabooses became more popular on railroads, especially after loads became larger and it was no longer feasible to observe a train from a caboose's cupola.¹⁶

Kansas City Southern Railroad Caboose #383 was one of a series of cabooses built by the Louisiana & Arkansas Railway Company (part of Kansas City Southern) in 1952. The railroad chose the bay-window design for the series, which included #380-390, likely due to the increased size of loads on railroads at the time, which would have made a bay-window design more useful.¹⁷ Although little is known about its operational history on the railroad, it is probable that it operated over the entire Kansas City Southern system.

However, by the mid-1980s railroads across the country began phasing out cabooses. Many freight trains replaced the caboose with a small box with a light to mark the end of the train, which were nicknamed "FREDs," "EDTs," or "one-eyed conductors." In addition, equipment along the right-of-way helped to detect hot boxes (overheated wheel bearings) or pieces of dragging equipment, further eliminating the need

¹⁵ Knape, William F. and Freeman Hubbard. *The Railroad Caboose: Its 100 Year History, Legend and Lore*. San Marino, CA: Golden West Books, 1968, pp. 25, 27.

¹⁶ Lynch and Caileff, Jr., p. 149.

¹⁷ *Ibid*, p. 159.

for cabooses. On the Kansas City Southern, only transfers and some trains operating on the railroads Southern Divisions retained cabooses by 1987.¹⁸

Caboose #383 was retired from the Kansas City Southern on August 2, 1990. After Caboose #383 was retired from active service, it was given to the City of Gravette and delivered to Gravette in May 1991. After two years of work, the caboose and surrounding Centennial Park were dedicated in 1993. Ever since,

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Caboose #383 has been on display adjacent to the Kansas City Southern railroad line as a reminder of the railroad's role in the history of Gravette.¹⁹

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE PROPERTY

Kansas City Southern Caboose #383 illustrates the advancement of caboose design as the loads hauled by railroads changed. Initially, cabooses had cupolas that allowed the train's crew to keep watch over the train and be aware of any problems that may develop. However, as loads became larger in the twentieth century, the traditional caboose design was not as effective. The larger loads made it harder for train crews to monitor the train from a traditionally-designed caboose with a cupola.

The solution to the problem of allowing visibility by the train crew while being able to accommodate larger loads was the bay-window caboose. It is believed that the bay-window caboose design first appeared on the Akron, Canton & Youngstown Railroad in 1923 although it was the Baltimore & Ohio Railroad that first adopted the design exclusively after trying an experimental model in 1930.²⁰ Kansas City Southern Caboose #383 represents the Kansas City Southern's own design of a bay-window caboose.

Kansas City Southern Caboose #383 illustrates the evolution of caboose design in the twentieth century in order to better handle the change in railroad loads. As a result, Kansas City Southern Railway Caboose #383 is being nominated to the National Register of Historic Places with **local significance** under **Criterion C** for its engineering as a rare and intact example of a Kansas City Southern bay-window caboose from the #380-390 series remaining in Arkansas.

In addition, the railroad was an important aspect of Benton County's history beginning in the late nineteenth century. The St. Louis & San Francisco Railroad (Frisco), which constructed a line through the eastern part of Benton County, was completed in the summer of 1881. The Bentonville Railway Company also built a

¹⁸ *Ibid*, p. 149.

¹⁹ Ransom, Allyson. City of Gravette. Telephone conversation with the author. 19 May 2010.

²⁰ Information on caboose history found at: <http://www.sdrm.org/history/caboose/caboosehist.html>.

line between Bentonville and Rogers in 1883.²¹ Although the Kansas City Southern line did not get completed until the 1890s, it was still an important rail corridor in the county.

The railroad line through Gravette was also an important contributing factor in its development in the early 1900s. In 1889, the village of Nebo (It would become Gravette in 1894.) was described as “a small village, containing two or three business houses...”²² However, the arrival of the railroad caused the town to grow

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quickly. By 1913, the Kansas City Southern line ran north-south through Gravette while a Frisco line ran southeast-northwest. By 1926, both lines remained although the Kansas City Southern had built a second track through town, indicating that its traffic had increased significantly.²³ Today, all vestiges of the Frisco line through Gravette have disappeared, and although the Kansas City Southern line is still in use, it has been reduced to one track through Gravette.

Today, the Kansas City Southern is exclusively a freight railroad – passenger service was discontinued in 1969 – and it remains an important railroad line through that part of Arkansas, a role it has played for over a century. Kansas City Southern Caboose #383 was an important workhorse in freight service on the Kansas City Southern for many years until it was retired and eventually brought to Gravette. As a result, it is also therefore eligible for nomination under **Criterion A** for its association with the role of railroad transportation in Benton County, Arkansas.

²¹ *The Goodspeed Biographical and Historical Memoirs of Northwestern Arkansas*. Chicago: The Goodspeed Publishing Co., 1889, p. 55.

²² *The Goodspeed Biographical and Historical Memoirs of Northwestern Arkansas*. Chicago: The Goodspeed Publishing Co., 1889, p. 112.

²³ Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps for Gravette, 1913 and 1926.

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BIBLIOGRAPHY

Drury, George H. *The Historical Guide to North American Railroads*. Milwaukee, WI: Kalmbach Books, 1985.

The Goodspeed Biographical and Historical Memoirs of Northwestern Arkansas. Chicago: The Goodspeed Publishing Co., 1889.

Information on caboose history found at: <http://www.sdrm.org/history/caboose/caboosehist.html>.

Information on Kansas City Southern Caboose #385 posted at the caboose's site in Decatur, Arkansas, by Peterson Farms.

"The Kansas City Southern Lines" found at
http://www.kcshs.org/schedule/subs/images/history/kcs_hist.htm.

Knape, William F., and Freeman Hubbard. *The Railroad Caboose: Its 100 Year History, Legend and Lore*. San Marino, CA: Golden West Books, 1968.

Lynch, Terry, and W. D. Caileff, Jr. *Kansas City Southern: Route of the Southern Belle*. Boulder: Pruett Publishing Company, 1987.

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Ransom, Allyson. City of Gravette. Telephone conversation with the author. 19 May 2010.

Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps for Gravette, 1913 and 1926.

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VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

From UTM point 15/369681E/4031706N, proceed northeasterly for 55 feet, thence proceed perpendicularly to the northwest for 30 feet, thence proceed perpendicularly to the southwest for 55 feet, thence proceed perpendicularly to the southeast for 30 feet to the point of beginning.

BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION

The boundary encompasses all of the property that contains Kansas City Southern Railway Caboose #383.

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 Documentation

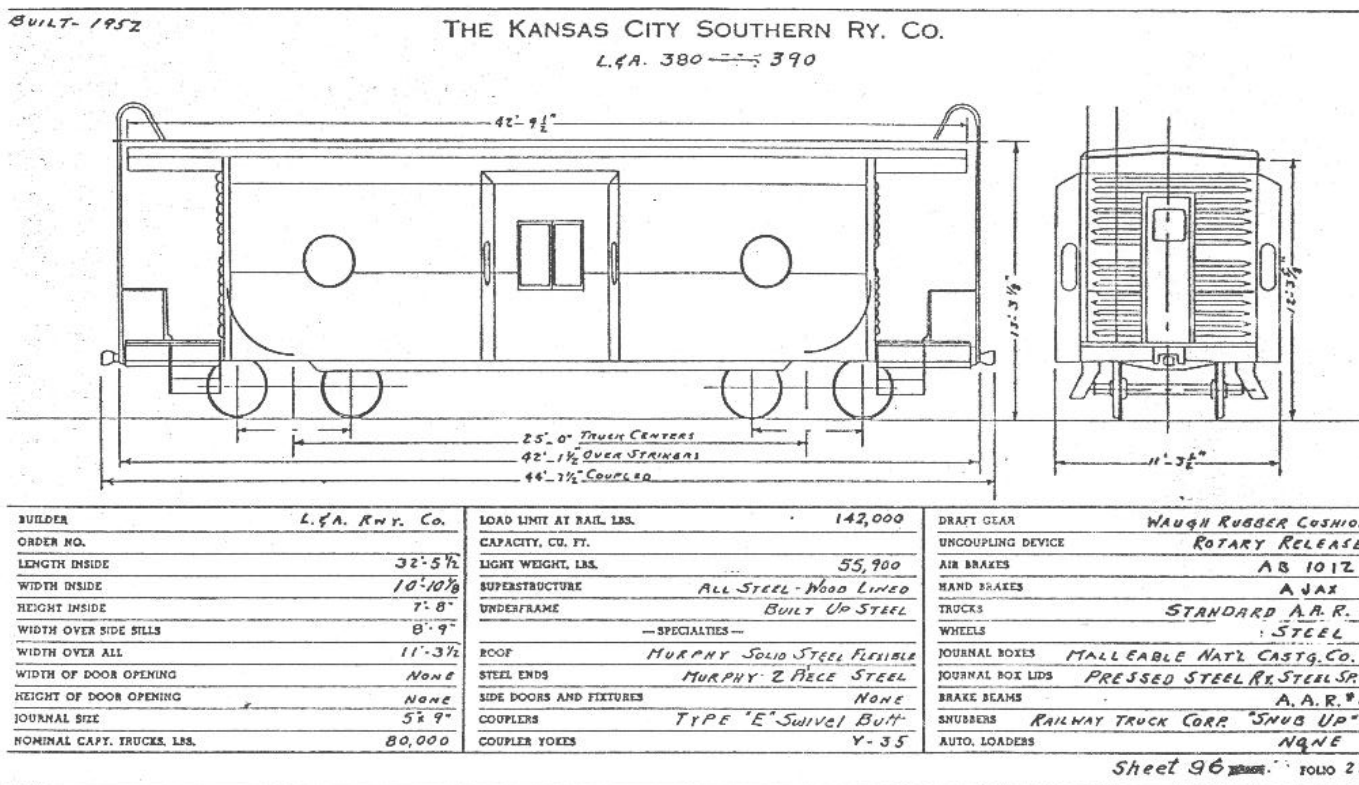


Diagram of Kansas City Southern Railway Caboose #383 (From Lynch, Terry, and W. D. Cailleff, Jr. *Kansas City Southern: Route of the Southern Belle*. Boulder: Pruett Publishing Company, 1987, p. 159.)