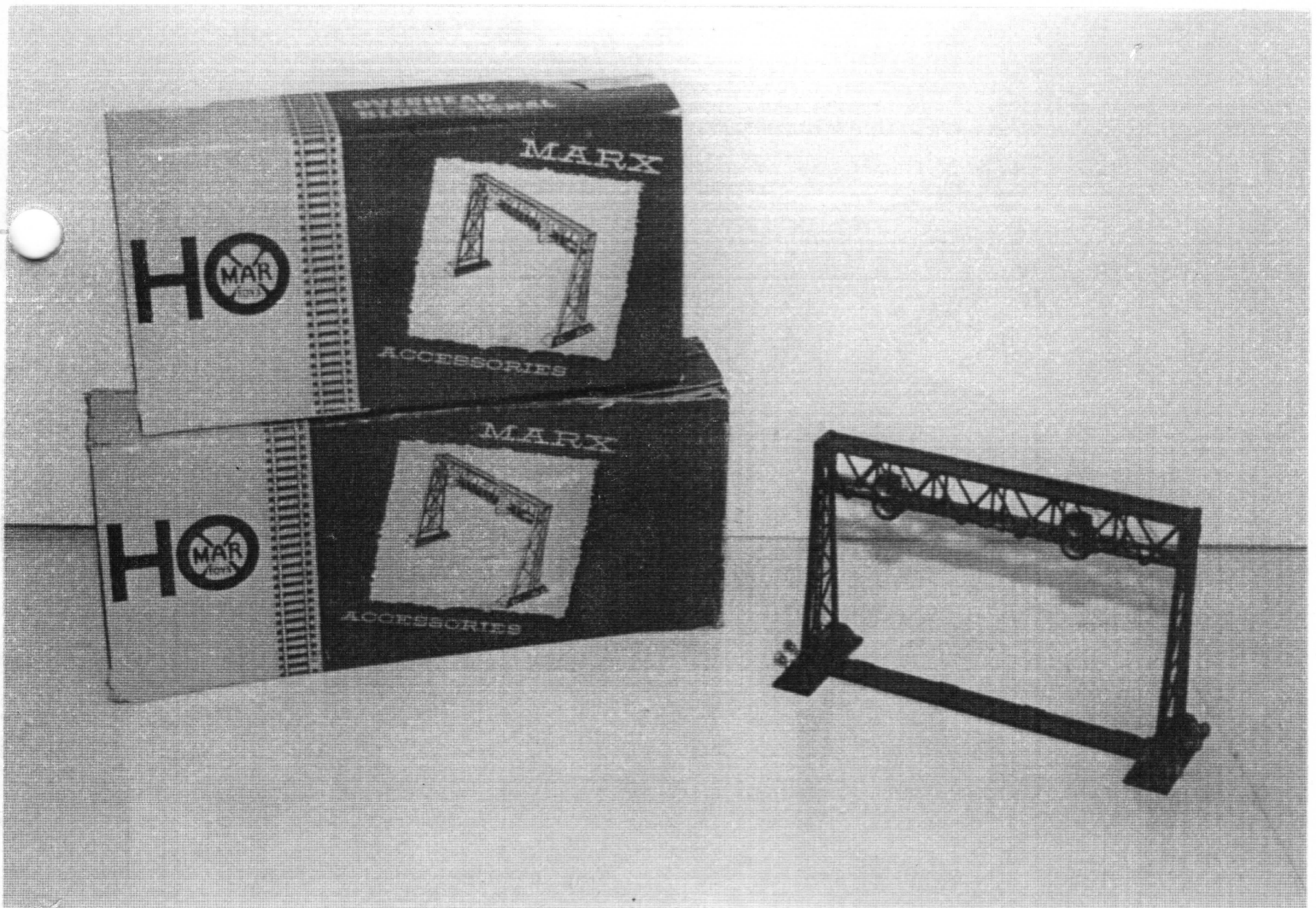


*COLLECTING WITH*

# MARX

Issue 35

June



Collecting With MARX

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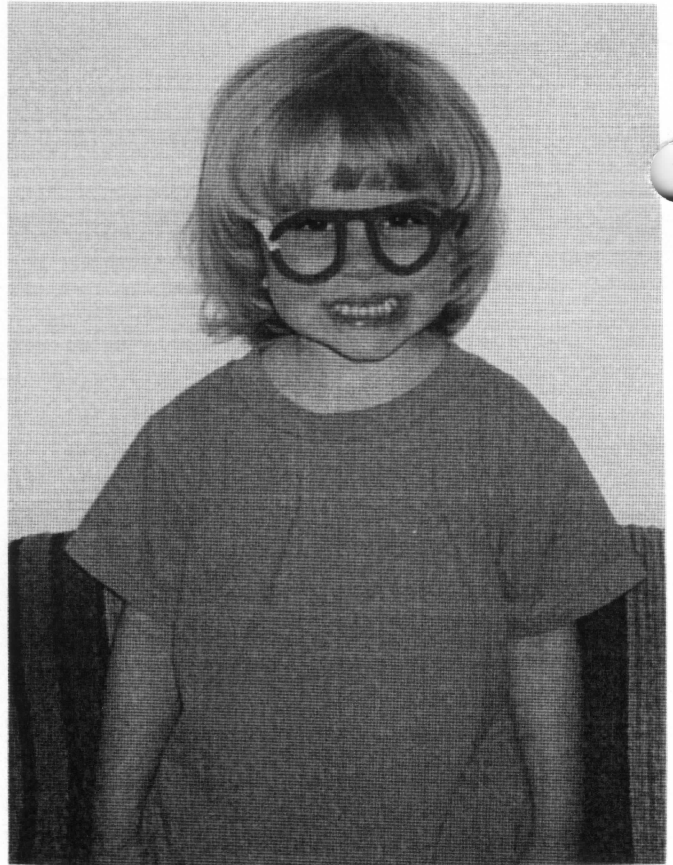
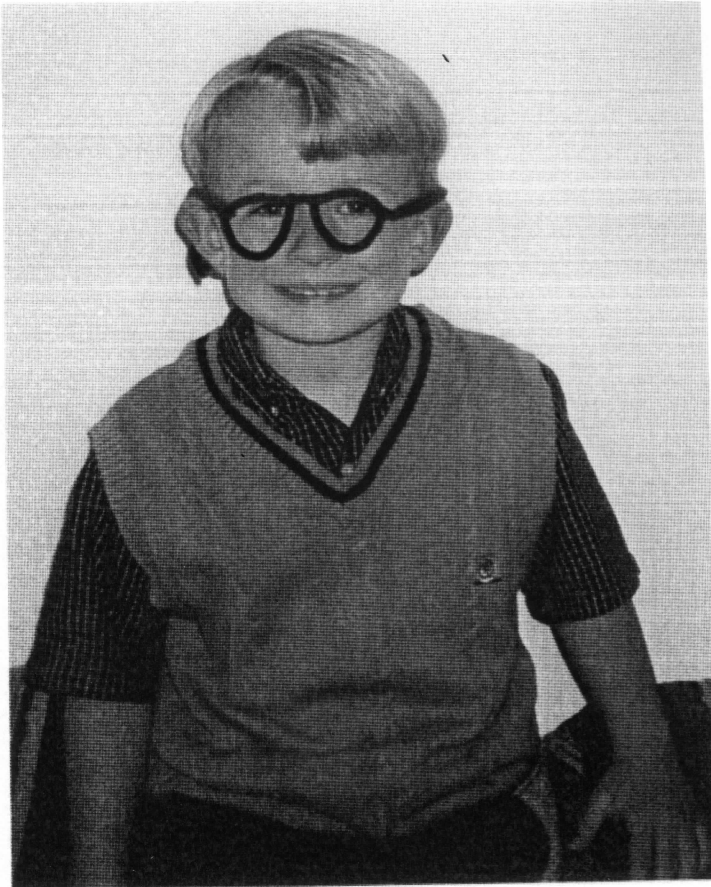
COLLECTING WITH MARX

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Louis and Lauren being silly with there pipe cleaner glasses.

We're entering the slowest time of the year for train collectors, summer. There are fewer shows, fewer connections, fewer items turning up and even fewer items on the internet. However those of us who continue to scout those hidden corridors may turn up something very nice. Or maybe not something exceptional but nevertheless an item that we have been looking for to complete a section of our collections. That brings me to something I saw on the internet lately. I was cruising through on ebay and noticed an item that had been bid on several times and was just new to the section. (This shows how many of us are actually out there looking unlike in days of old.) It was what was supposed to be the large 12 piece military boxed set. Now this comparison shows how things have changed in the past 10-15 years. Now the large military set is comprised of 500 engine and tender, gondola with ammunition load and cardboard insert, troop observation, searchlight, airplane with flat car, troop truck with canopy and flatcar, tank with flatcar, radio car with square antenna, and any combination of three gun cars (out of the possible 4 cars). Many included some tin men and maybe even a tent or two. Now the airplane could be any one of several colors and the tank usually was either all OD or the more common camouflaged with plain tin turret.

The first set I saw like this one was at the St. Louis Train Collectors Association convention several years ago. This set had the canopy for the truck and contained a white airplane load and was in the box and while not in perfect condition was in a very nice acceptable condition. The price tag was at 1200.00 dollars and I remember correctly it was a firm price.

Now while the description I am about to give several years later, I must say that on day three of the auction.

This set was already at 1145.00 dollars and the quality of the set was excellent but there were a few downs. Let me describe here.

First let me tell you about the good things. The Engine was clean and nice and the tender was the less common 500 with black top, the other cars were mostly very clean with a total of only eleven cars. The truck had no canopy which is worth a good 100.00 bill to me, the gondola had no load and both the truck and airplane looked to be repainted. the airplane was the most common red.

In today's market, frankly, it may be all a person can find and all-in-all this set was very clean, but when I shop these days I seem to always reflect on the good 'ole days when a C9 1/2 set was at what we thought was extremely expensive and today's hohum set is even more so.

This issue holds many interesting stories pictures and thoughts so don't miss anything. Send in your stories and what you are finding and share with your collecting friends all across North America and three foreign countries.

Max

## **The Curator's Corner: #6434 HO Overhead Block Signal** by Allan Miller

One of the most fascinating parts of Marx collecting for me, both as an individual collector and as a museum curator, is what Paul Harvey has referred to for years as "the rest of the story"! Most Marx train collectors, especially those fond of their HO gauge trains, are familiar with the #6434 Overhead Block Signal accessory. Few, however, know what it can REALLY do.

In August of 1991, I had the pleasure of interviewing Ray Hubiak, who worked in the Marx Girard plant for 41 years, many of them in the Research and Development department. Ray designed the #6434. And a few interesting things came to light when we spoke about the accessory.

Much to my surprise, Ray informed me that Marx had the operating parts of an ACTUAL overhead block signal shipped to the plant for study! This was apparently not that rare of an occurrence in the R & D work for the train line. Ray came up with the signal design, but was stumped when it came to lighting the accessory without the bulbs overheating and melting the delicate plastic structure. This was a problem they had experienced on some of the larger O gauge plastic items. Another R & D worker, Willie Rexford, came up with a low voltage bulb which only utilized PART of the current passing through it.

The instructions enclosed with the accessory mention the bulb, and even indicate a replacement number, but they don't describe the other added feature that Mr. Hubiak added to the piece. In his words "If you wanted this just for one track, you could bring the contacts around and change both sides so it would look right." In other words, the position of the signal lights can be adjusted!

The brass contacts under the lights can be lowered and pivoted out of the way. Then the light housings can be slid out of place, carefully moved to another location, and reinserted. In this way, using just the two light housings included on the standard accessory, SEVEN distinct signal arrangements can be set up! And all seven of them would be WORKING arrangements, with the lights still functioning normally!

Why Marx chose not to disclose this feature in any of the literature on the accessory is not known. Ray Hubiak was never informed why this feature was left "hidden". He felt it was probably due to a fear that kids would damage the signal trying to make these changes, prompting parents to return the item.

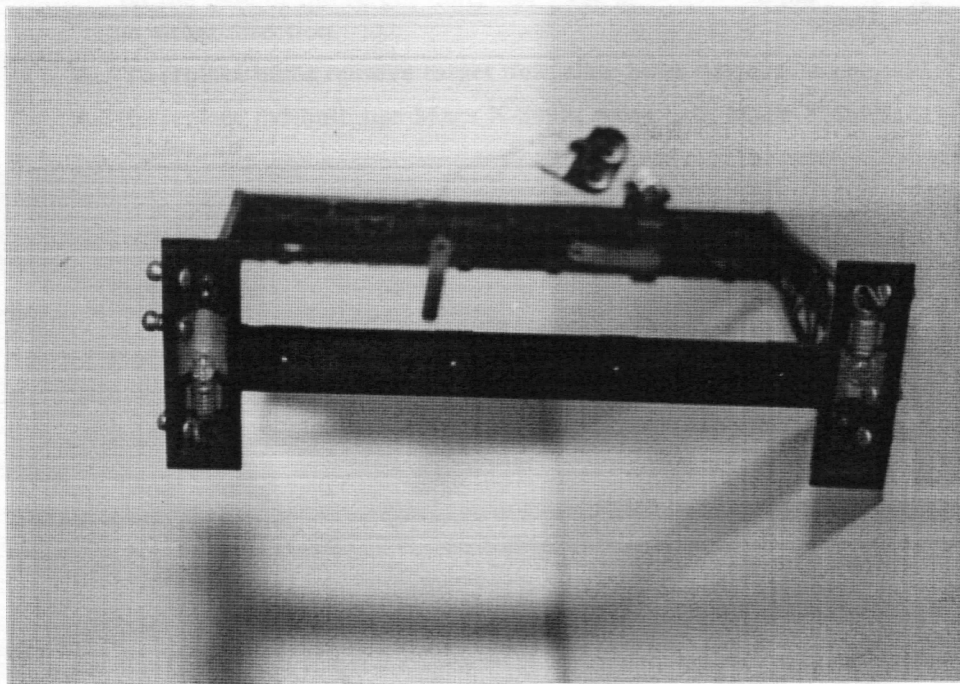
What other hidden features lie waiting to be discovered in our treasured marx toys and trains? Who really knows? Some will no doubt be found out, while others will remain a mystery forever. Ray Hubiak has at least helped us to uncover one of them!

I would love to hear your comments, additions, ideas for future columns, or just get to meet more of you! I can be reached via email at [Allan@ToyAndTrain.com](mailto:Allan@ToyAndTrain.com) , or through the museum at:

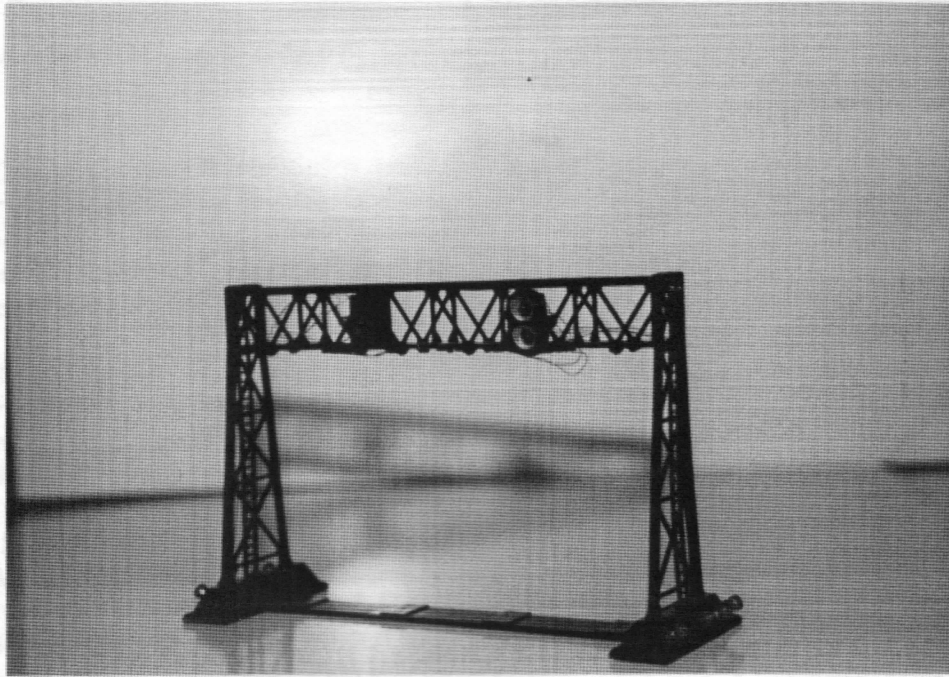
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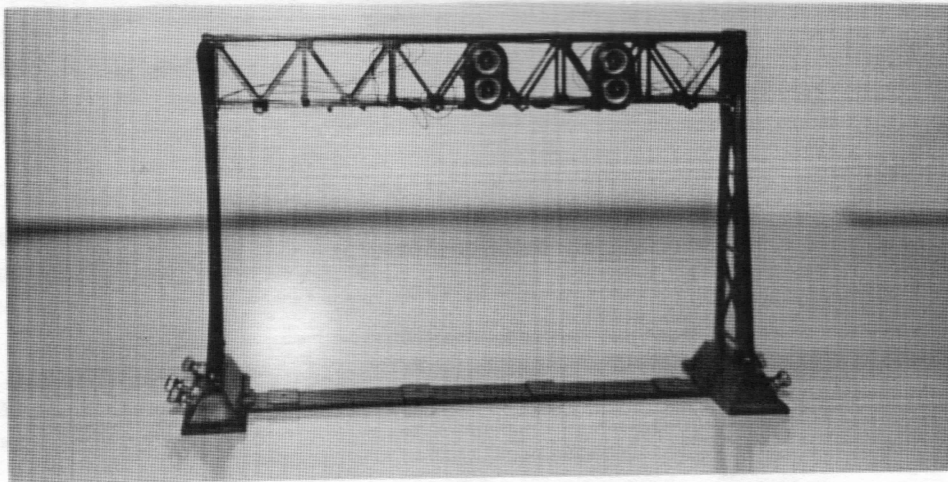
**Photo #1:** The Marx HO #6434 Overhead Block Signal with two original boxes. Note that the boxes are two different sizes. The smaller is labeled #6434, while the larger is #6434-A. There apparently was no difference in their contents.



**Photo #2:** The underside of the Marx HO #6434 signal. Note that one of the connector plates has been rotated out of the way and the light housing has been detached to show how this would work.



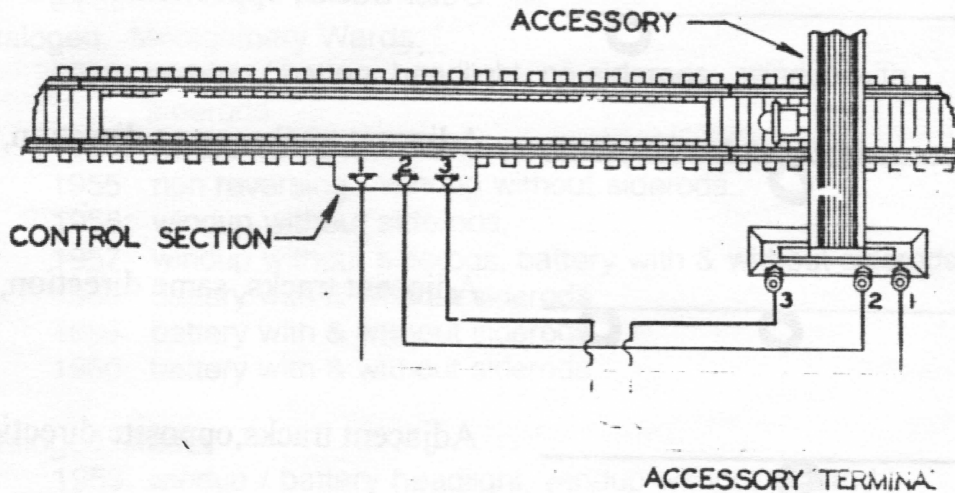
**Photo #3:** The #6434 signal arranged to have one light housing facing each direction on the outer two of the three track bays.



**Photo #4:** The #6434 signal arranged to have two light housings facing the same direction on ADJOINING tracks.

## INSTRUCTIONS FOR HO GA. BLOCK SIGNAL

1. Place accessory near Control Section of track and make connections as indicated in sketch below.



2. The target units are fastened to the girders on the base of the target unit, and these units can move in either direction.
3. To replace bulbs remove target unit, slide brass contacts to one side.
4. To replace red bulb use Marx X-569F, green bulb Marx X-509E, or equivalent.

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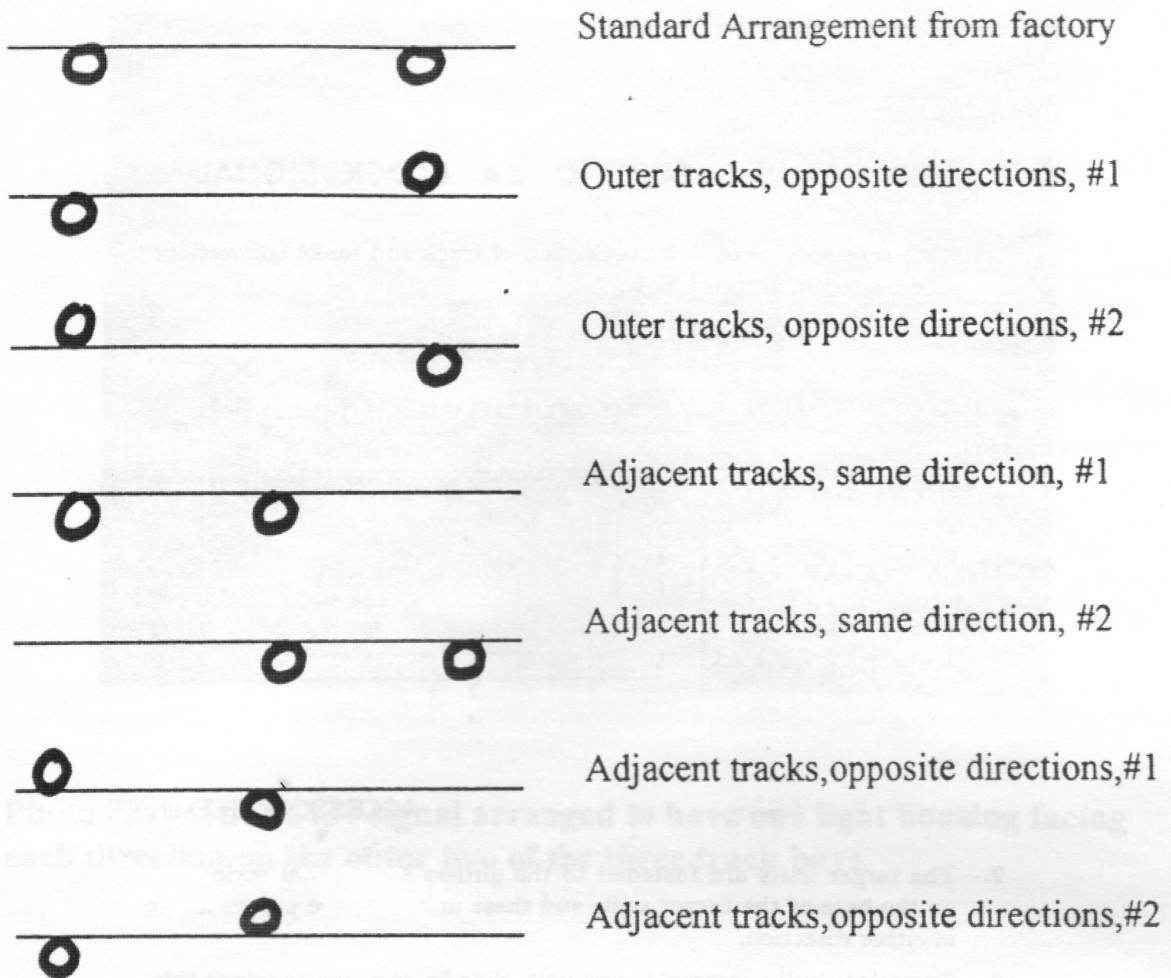
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*All inquiries regarding repairs or service should be addressed to*

Service Division

GIRARD, PA.

**Diagram #1:** A copy of the original instruction sheet from the #6434 signal. Note that mine has damage, so some lettering is unclear.



**Diagram #2: The seven different arrangements which are possible on the Marx #6434 signal.**

IS-114

## REAL FUN with REAL RAILROAD WHISTLE SIGNALS!

The Whistle Signals shown below are illustrated by

"o" for short sounds: "-" for longer sounds:

Sound	Indication	Sound	Indication
(a) o	Stop	(l) - - o -	Approaching grade crossings
(b) - -	Proceed	(n) - o	Acknowledgment of train signal
(c) - o o o	Flagman go back	(o) o -	Second engine of double header take control of air brakes
(d) - - - -	Flagman return from south or west	(p) o o o o -	Fire alarm, to call attention of trackmen to fire
(e) - - - - o	Flagman return from north or east	(q) - - o	Rear engineman take slack
(f) - - -	When running, train parted	(r) Succession of short sounds	Alarm for persons or stock on the track
(g) o o	Answer to misc. signals		
(h) o o o	When train is standing, back		
(j) o o o o	Call for signals		

Run Your Railroad With These Authentic Whistle Signals

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200 FIFTH AVENUE

NEW YORK, NEW YORK



591 Marx Engines

Cataloged: Sears from 1953 to 1958, Wards from 1953 to 1960.

Motor: windup, windup 2 speed, reversing, non-reversing, double reduction, battery operated.

Features: windup/ battery headlight, plastic boiler front on windup & battery, diecast on electric, came with automatic switches in 1957, 58 & 60

Wards, non reversing had screw on boiler side Wards 1955, headlight on electrics.

Cataloged: Montgomery Wards:

1953: windup / battery headlight, no siderods; windup with siderods.

1954: reversing electric, windup with & without siderods.

1955: non reversing, windup without siderods.

1956: windup without siderods,

1957: windup without siderods, battery with & without siderods.

1958: battery with & without siderods.

1959: battery with & without siderods.

1960: battery with & without siderods.

Cataloged: Sears:

1953: windup / battery headlight, windup without siderod.

1954: windup / battery headlight with siderods, windup with siderods, 2 speed, windup without siderods.

1955: reversing electric, windup with & without siderods, windup with battery headlight with siderods.

1956: reversing electric, battery without siderods, windup with battery headlight with siderods, windup without siderods.

1957: battery without siderods, windup without siderods, electric.

1958: windup without siderods, battery without siderods.

battery and windup pulled 6" freight, while the electric pulled the 7" cars and 6" passenger cars.

Gary's Marx Train Video is now for sale, new and improved. Two hours long. Low budget, out of focus, one man show. Mainly on Joyline, M10,000, Army, Mexican and British Marx, plus some odd sets and custom made items. \$17.50 post paid, Gary Anderson, Box 143, Stephen, Mn, 56757.

Wanted: Number series cars for KCS Cabooses, 6" Fruit Growers reefers, and Pacemaker 6" boxcars. Also need parts and pieces to complete English sets, like green engine, red tender and Green Link set. In Marx "regular production" stuff I need a red 6" log car, a 994 style engine and tender in red, and an extra 6" flat for a #5 tank in OD. Marx Claussen, 7475 E. St. Hwy. YY, Springfield, MO 65802. 1-417-866-1068 and fax at same number or email at louismarx@worldnet.att.net.

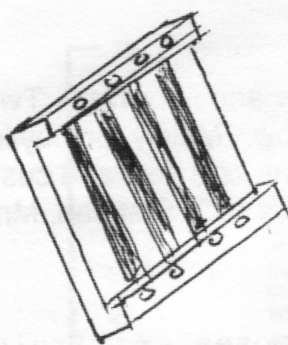
Probably the most familiar diecast engine that Marx made is the diecast 999. It was first made before WW2, and lasted until the mid fiftys. It went thru several design changes and came in 5 distinct bodys. The first is known to the Marx community as the Open Spoked pilot. This engine had a pilot that you could see thru between the spokes. The motor was the faithful four wheel with ten spoked drivers and used a three piece pickup. It had two wheel lead and trailing trucks, making it a 2-4-2 wheel configuration.

The second body had these openings filled in, because the pilot proved to be very fragile. The spokes still were visible, with horizontal bars across the top and bottom. This is known as the Closed Spoke model. It used the same motor. Both of these body styles are very hard to find.

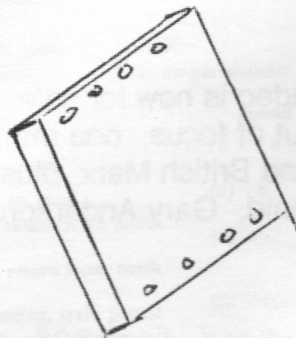
The third style's pilot is now flat with a row of rivits across the top and bottom. This body is probably postwar, and came with both the ten spoke, three piece pickup motor, and the later Baldwin style wheel with one piece pickup motor. It could be known as the Flat Pilot body style. No common name has usually been given to these last three body styles, since they are not normally collected.

The forth style is probably a completely different mold, rather than just modifying the old dies. The smokestack is open, the rivits under the cab and the Made In USA on the back of the cab floor, are now smaller, and there is a drip railing at the back of the cab. There are also extra braces on the pillar that holds the trailing truck. The change that is most noticable is the pilot. It still is flat (no spokes) but has raised bars across the top and bottom with rivits. This one is probably the most prolific and longest run of any of these bodys, and could be called Flat with Bars pilot.

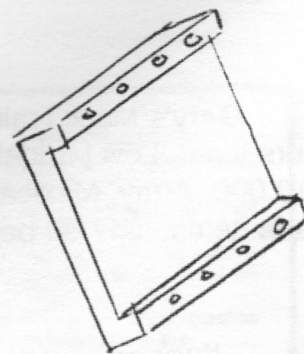
The fifth and last style in US production is the same as the fourth but moves the Marx trademark from the smokebox sides to the sides of the cab. This body style used the double reduction motor with front pilot wheels either stamped steel or diecast. This engine is found in some unusual sets, one pulling four wheel plastic cars, and may have been sold in Canada. This last style was also used in Mexico for Mexican Plastimarx production. They removed the Marx trademark on the cab sides, but kept the Made In USA on the cab floor, where is was less obvious.



OPEN  
CLOSED



FLAT



FLAT  
BARS

198: Eatons 1949, Sears 1960

Motor: windup, AC, DC in red engine

Light: none

Color: black, red

Features: pulled the Eatons passenger and freight sets, Sears freight, glued *ON* headlight

400: Sears 1952, Montgomery Wards 1953

Motor: windup, reversible, non reversing, double reduction

Light: with and without

Color: black, olive drab

Features: windup and double reduction with puffer, screw holes in boiler or steam chest, glued in headlight

401: Aldens 1963 / smoke, Sears 1968

Motor: windup, battery

Light: none

Color: black, grey

Features: windup with puffer

490: Sears 1962, Montgomery Wards 1962

Motor: windup, reversible, non reversing, double reduction, battery

Light: with and without

Color: black, grey, olive drab?

Features: chugger with rivit, electric with puffer?, plain or white stripe, screw hole in boiler or steam chest

need verification of

198 with light, probably not possible, since headlight glued to flat surface.

400 in grey, time frame wrong.

400 with stripe, time frame wrong

The easiest way to tell the difference between a 400 and 490 in ads or pictures is the awning on the cab window: On the 400, it covers 1/2 the window, while on the 490, it is much shorter.

**FERROCARRIL  
PLASTIMARX**

**PARA PILAS ELECTRICAS**



The green box car you spoke of in the April issue is St. Louis and Southwestern #90172. If you look in the Marx (Greenberg) book, this number is skipped over. Mine is the only one known to exist to date. Someday I'll write an article about it and how I obtained this very desirable piece.

The picture enclosed is a rather unusual item not seen everyday. I suspect a lot of people don't even know about it. I didn't, until about 6 or 7 years ago.

Years ago, in restaurant's and parlor cars, when you ordered a cup of coffee, you were served cream in a miniature milk bottle. With a cardboard top. I guess Louis decided if you were going to run his trains, you should have cream out of a container using the "Marx" cardboard cover. I have a couple of these neat little creamers. They don't show up with the lid very often so keep your eyes peeled and have coffee with cream compliments of Louis Marx!

John Torgerson



John we would love to see an article about your green box car. I have seen one other and I also saw a box full of other road names in different colors.

The only cream bottles I have seen are loads in various sized truck and trailers produced through the years from as early as the early 1930's. Jim Norton has a couple of these and were found at a toy show or flea market. I believe they were included in many different situations through the years but as all other cheap small pieces they were the first lost broken or thrown away. John thanks and it's always good to hear from you.

In your response to John Torgerson in the April issue, you mentioned a green 6" boxcar that belonged to a friend. I think I can shed some light on it. I believe it is a faded brown car.

When I first started collecting in 1987, a dealer, who later became a very good friend, sold me a box full of 6" Marx cars for a couple of dollars apiece. In it was a green 6" Bessemer solid door boxcar. He said he had never seen one and didn't know what it was. I took it to some TCA meets and asked all the Marx collectors I could find, and no one

had ever seen one. Our only clue was the tabs were brownish suggesting fading, but the green was very even over the entire car. A couple of years later, I found another green boxcar laying on it's side at a train show. When I picked it up and turned it over, the other side was brown. I put it back thinking 'Why would anyone want this?' Now I know why and I wish I had purchased it. Karl Wandry also has a green boxcar, but it has little more brown in it, supporting the faded brown theory.

A few years ago, I painted the base of mine OD green and put it in my Army train. Now THAT will open the eyes of a Marx collector!

Ken Albers

Marx: John Torgerson's note on color variations of similar rolling stock in Issue 34 of *Collecting with Marx* reminded me that Larry Jensen wrote much the same thing in Chapter II, *Scale Cars* ("Three-sixteenths") in Volume 2 of *Greenberg's Guide to Marx Trains*:

"Differences in color shade, shine, and car finish are not considered variations but differences that occurred in the car's production, as when colors were casually mixed during their manufacture. Time and the elements also effect color. If you were to arrange many of the same color car from dark to light it would be difficult to discern a color change between two adjacent cars. Yet the first car is obviously many shades lighter in color than the last." (page 23, 1990 edition)

There is a variation in the 20102 scale caboose: one variation has a white, instead of gray, catwalk with a white edging around the lower half of the windows.

Al

Gary Anderson

Allen Miller wrote in the last *Collecting With Marx* that we can never 'Say Never' about the possible trains that Marx has made. I take that as a challenge and offer the following as Marx Trains that 'Marx Never Made' for sale.

Joyline 350 windup engine with any of the following: #1, 3/16" scale cars, #2, 8 wheel plastic freight cars, #3, the large freight terminal, #4, diesel motor from #21, or #5, with the smoke unit from a 666.

Or, an E8 plastic diesel with #1, Joyline cars, #2, windup motor, #3, 201 observation, or #4, baking powder smoke.

I feel confident in stating that the above were never made. These can not be, because of the different time frames that these particular items were made, and of the practical incompatibility of these items. You can have fun imaginmarxing impossible combinations. Having said this there are some items that show up that are probably not regular Marx production but are after original sale rearranging.

I offer the following as Probably not factory made, but could be kitbashed: Lehigh Valley, Lackawana, or red Pennsy hoppers, or Sinclair and UTLX tank cars, or the wedge tender on red/white or black/white six inch frames. Here the time frames of the items are not compatible.

Does anyone have their own cars that can be kitbashed, but probably not made for Marx production?

Have reread Issue 34 and now guess I should take offense at part of your editorial. Well, not really offense but an aggressive question: why did you exclude my contribution in the O'Brien books?

I am not aware of any inaccuracies in the current #5 Edition - #4 had an obvious typo for the value of the Bunny Train and some of the photos the publisher had chosen were different - but not accurate? No one has written or called with any corrections. At least my photos in O'Brien's had a connotation when the item was made up and not original MARX production.

I do hartily agree that the Rev. Robert Whitacre's Vol.3 of the Greenberg series is wonderful and a tremendous help to all serious MARX collectors. Vol.1 & 2 are also excellent guides although Eric Matzke has not been involved for many years. Even the Greenberg Pocket Guides are a great help. Most researched MARX articles are positively contributory (like Allan Miller's #200 Trolley story in Issue 34) but those that are mere speculation or wishful thinking are a disgrace - they should not be in print as sometime down the road, they may become "fact".

Oh, in case all of your readers haven't figured it out yet, the values in O'Brien (for MARX) are "buying" prices, not a selling, insurance, or ego dollar amount. Even then, with over 1-1/2 years between redoing these values and the publication of Edition#5, they are not "accurate".

Anyway, apology accepted in advance for this grievous oversight !

**Richard L. MacNary**

Richard, I apologize whole-heartedly. Your book was the very first source that I had to use for my Marx train collecting days. I was absolutely tickled to obtain any source to tell me something about the about the trains I looked for at every turn. I collected without knowing anything about what I was collecting. You are absolutely right. This has been a great source for collectors throughout the last two decades.. Who really knows what a piece will fetch on a given day I believe these are only guides as far as price goes.

588 Black Switcher-Rare (no way)

I may not be the smartest guy in the world as well you can tell from reading what I write, but I have now seen a black 588 switcher that is extremely rare. In all of my collecting Marx trains days I had seen only one in person and now on the internet I saw one sell (7-8 years later) a dummy 588 switcher. I would like to know how many of you out there have one. The two I have seen both had plastic knuckle coupler front and back and 1960-64ish appearance overall.

Does anyone know if this came in a set and if so what set was it? I don't think this one can be an aftermarket put together because the knuckle is too thick to slide through the open on the front of the engine. Both ends of the 588 have a knuckle and I believe the back one that joins the two engines together can be changed but not the front one.

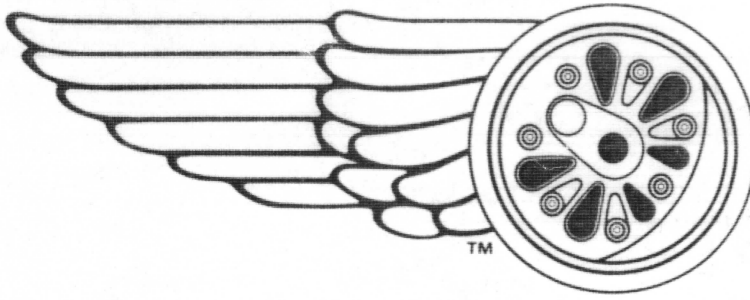
Is this the only one that has a dummy from the factory? Of this style switcher we have the New York Central in black, gray (couple of shades) and maroon. You have the Illinois Central, Rock Island, Lehigh Valley and Cape Canaveral Express. Then of course we had the aftermarker 588 style switchers. If anybody out there has any style 588 switcher with what is believed to be an original factory production dummy with it please let us know.

Those of you who have odd ball Marx toys or trains please feel free to share with the rest of us.

Hi Marx and the readers of Collecting With Marx. We all know about Ward's and Sears as two of the bigger chain stores that sold Marx toys and trains, but I would like to learn about some of the other stores that sold Marx items. I have a # 408 green lamppost in the box and on the box is the original price sticker. It is for \$0.42 and has the store name of Noah's Ark. It also has some masking like tape on the bottom of the box that is printed with the Noah's Ark name and also says "guaranteed replacement auto parts", "auto accessories" and "satisfaction guaranteed or your money back". I have a # 410 searchlight in the box and it has the original price tag. It is for \$0.50 and has the store name of Hess Brothers. I also have a red and silver 547 express baggage car with the original price sticker on the bottom. The price is \$0.32 and the company name is G.C. Murphy Co. If any of you have any information on these three stores I would greatly appreciate you writing into Marx so he can put in the next issue. Also, I would invite any of you who have original stickers, tags, etc. from other stores on your toys or trains to write in so we can learn about these stores and possibly provide you with additional info on them.

Marx, you always say to let you know what we are finding out there. My latest big finds are a blue airplane on a flat car; an army siege gun car; and a 4 wheel, red lettering in a silver background, Canadian Pacific tender.

Arnie Dowd

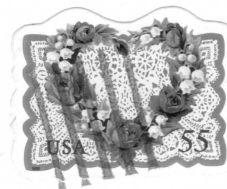


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