



THE McILHANEY CREAMERY COMPANY

Submitted by Margie O'Neill

The McIlhaney Creamery was originally located at the current Maxey Park location. One thousand cows and numerous horses were watered at the lake. The City of Lubbock wanted the land so they condemned the ranch house, causing McIlhaney to move to the southeast, cut his herd and buy milk from local farmers as far away as Brownfield. The milk was brought into Lubbock on five refrigerated cars, also known as "reefers," leased from the Burlington Northern. These reefers, originally the Burlington green, were soon painted a butter yellow and imprinted with the McIlhaney logo.

McIlhaney, one of just two businesses on the Fort Worth & Denver to have employed subleased billboard reefers, also had a pair of BREX cars (75213 and 75214) renumbered MKCS 4800-4801. Interestingly, neither Colorado & Southern nor Fort Worth & Denver reefers were repainted for industries located on those roads, even though both subsidiaries had reefers identical to the BREX 7500s.

The yellow sides of the McIlhaney cars carried the slogan "Real Butter from the Cool Breezy Plains of Texas" on four lines in standard six inch black block serif lettering to the right of the door, with the reporting marks and number below, sandwiched between two horizontal rules. To the left of the door was a large white McIlhaney's Creamery Butter box with black lettering and red trim, and the creamery name and location beneath in standard black serif letters.

The Lubbock Model Railroad Association would like to thank Al Fox for the background information in this article. Al was 60-years-old in 1951 when he started working with his father at McIlhaney Creamery. The elder Mr. Fox worked for the City of Lubbock and worked at the creamery to supplement his family's income.

The L.M.R.A. would also like to thank the West Texas Helicopter for providing us with an excellent photo opportunity of the old creamery property and rail siding locations.

A LETTER FROM JAN KUTCH

May I add a little to the variations of memory regarding the local reefers?

The Burlington Bulletin is the publication of the Burlington Route Historical Society, headquartered in La Grange, Ill. Issue Number 28, 1993, is dedicated to the "Burlington Billboard Reefers." In 61 pages, Hol Wagner and Bob Landeregan cover the history and present the only remaining drawings, rare pictures, and HO models of roughly 47 leasing companies, including Lubbock's McIlhaney Creamery and Banner Creamery of Abilene. You can obtain more information from the Society at <http://www.burlington-route.com>. Mr. Landeregan was a former chief engineer for Burlington Fruit Express and had xerox copies of the original drawings for many of the cars in the BREX Roster. Colorful, leased bill board reefers were widely used in this country prior to July 1938. Most dated only from the end of Prohibition, in 1933. In 1934, the Interstate Commerce Commission outlawed them as an illegal rebate to the lessee, and set the same date for discontinuation as the removal of arch bar trucks from interstate service. Following that date the lessee could have its name in letters no more than 1 foot high. A few large shippers owned their own cars, which explains the continuation of some colorful paint schemes.

Burlington Refrigerator Express Company (BREX) leased class RM-7 40 ft wooden bodied refrigerator cars from the Chicago, Burlington & Quincy RR. The two Texas creameries were the only companies to sublease from the Fort Worth & Denver. Neither the Colorado Southern nor FW&D (subsidiaries of CB&Q) repainted any of their own cars, even though they had identical cars available. All BREX cars had "Standard Body Brown" (mineral red) ends, roofs and fascias and black side hardware. "VENTILATOR REFRIGERATOR" in standard block serif lettering appeared near the top of the sides to the right of the door. The standard BREX cars had yellow sides. In addition to more than 58 breweries, at least 23 produce companies had cars repainted to advertize their products. Many companies, including McIlhaney, retained the yellow sides.

According to Wagner, McIlhaney Creamery had two cars, BREX 75213 and 75214, renumbered as MKCX 4800-4801. The article includes a drawing with a detailed plan. No photo is available. It goes on to state that the yellow sides had 6 inch black block serif lettering. To the left of the door was a large white McIlhaney's Creamery Butter Box with black lettering and red trim. All appears to be the same as our other info.

Banner Creamery of Abilene was at the southernmost end of the FW&D's Wichita Valley subsidiary. BREX 75933 was repainted with orange-yellow sides and renumbered BCCX 4900. To the left of the door, this colorful car had a butter box in light yellow, light green and white. A scene in the top section of the box had a light green tree, grass, and cow against a light yellow sky. The slogan "West Texas' Favorite Butter," in six inch medium blue Roman letters and underlined in white surrounded the box. To the right of the door, was "Banner" in large medium blue script with a white border. Roughly centered was a black bordered medium blue oval with "CREAMERY" in orange bordered white letters. Beneath this "ABILENE, TEXAS" in six inch medium blue Roman letters was underlined in white. The reporting marks were 7 inch medium blue block serif letters. Again there is a copy of the original plan drawing and no picture.

I will try to have the magazine at our August meeting so we can all drool over possible projects for contest winning models. Or we might just enjoy the original Coors drawings.