

Soo Line #13332



Type: Steel Flatcar

Built: 1924

Length: 42' 0"



Railroads in America have long been dependent on freight service, even going as far as almost completely abandoning passenger and mail service in 1971, when the present-day *Amtrak* took over.

In 1827, the Baltimore and Ohio Railway had laid the first rail tracks (which are still used today) in downtown Baltimore, building in all directions until the trains crossed the infamous Sand Patch Grade in the Appalachians, served coal fields in West Virginia, and carried passengers to cities as far out as St. Louis and Chicago by the 1870s. By now, other railroads had caught on, and the entire continent was able to be crossed by rail by mid-1869.

The first "flatcars" in America were work cars used by the B&O and other eastern railroads to haul ties, rail, and materials to work sites. However, by 1900, the vast majority of flatcars were used in standard freight service. At loading ramps and parking lots across the nation, these cars were able to be loaded with anything from crates, automobiles, pipes, and even small buildings.



Everett DeGolyer photo



Car #13332 was built in 1924 for service on the Duluth South Shore and Atlantic Railway, which operated iron ore, passenger, and small freight trains on Michigan's upper peninsula. On January 1, 1961, the DSS&A became part of the Minneapolis, St. Paul and Sault Ste. Marie Railroad, more commonly known as the famous "Soo Line." In 1990, the Soo Line was absorbed by the much larger Canadian National Railroad, but the once-modern 13332 and similar post-WWI cars were retired five years earlier. In 1985, the car was received by the East Troy Railroad, where it continues to operate hauling heavy work equipment to sites along the seven-mile line and Santa Claus into East Troy during the annual Christmas Parade Train.



13332 arrives in East Troy with Santa during the 2023 Parade Train