

Western Pacific Railroad 123

Heavyweight Baggage Car

A rare example of a passenger car built by the Pressed Steel Car Company, Western Pacific 123 was one of 20 baggage cars purchased by the WP in 1923-24, replacing 20 earlier cars leased from the Denver and Rio Grande Railroad. These cars were used on all the WP's long distance trains, including the flagship *Scenic Limited* and its successor the *Exposition Flyer*, until the arrival of the stainless steel *California Zephyr*.

The Pressed Steel Car Company was formed in 1899 via the consolidation of two other firms that had pioneered techniques in steel rail car construction. PSCCo continued to be an innovator, using custom pressed shapes to produce steel and steel underframe cars, particularly freight cars. Along with other producers of steel designs, the PSCCo helped lead the transition from wood to steel equipment.

While pressed steel cars had the advantage of being lighter in weight than similar cars built from structural steel, repairs were more expensive. The pressed parts were often custom work that needed to be specially purchased or made. For this reason, construction with structural steel shapes won out by the late 1900s - early 1910s. By the 1920s, when WP 123 and her sisters were built, Pressed Steel Car was just another builder. The company mainly built freight and rail transit cars until it closed in 1956.

The WP's 121-140 were the only all-baggage cars on the railroad, after the leased D&RG cars were returned, until new baggage cars arrived for the *California Zephyr*. WP 123 was heavily modified in the mid-1950s for MOW service and survived until the early 1980s when it was donated to the FRRS by the Union Pacific Railroad.

builder

Pressed Steel Car Co.

built

December, 1923

type

Steel Baggage Express

specification number 2236

length

63 feet 3 inches overall

height

14 feet 1 inch overall

original cost

\$16,641.00

operating weight

102,000 lbs

acquisition

donated by Union Pacific