

Buy Lots in the Coming Residence Suburb of Los Angeles.

Price Will Soon be Advanced — BETTER BUY NOW!



Large Lots  
50 x 150

**\$60**

An Electric Car every four minutes will run through the Pasadena Villa Tract.

We Lead, Others Follow.

Our Location  
Is Unequaled.

NOW RUNNING THROUGH PASADENA VILLA TRACT.

Two electric lines now running. Another will open to the public in a few days, and two more will rapidly follow. Our transformation will be rapid, wonderful and grand. Remember that twenty-five years ago Pasadena was a sheep pasture. Today Pasadena is bound to become the greatest tourist resort on the face of the globe.—General M. C. Wentworth, Manager Hotel Raymond. Architects are now drawing plans for the new Tourist Hotel, to cost \$100,000, which will be built on a hill fifty feet higher than the famous Raymond.

## PASADENA VILLA TRACT

Is Immediately Adjoining on the City Limits of Los Angeles.

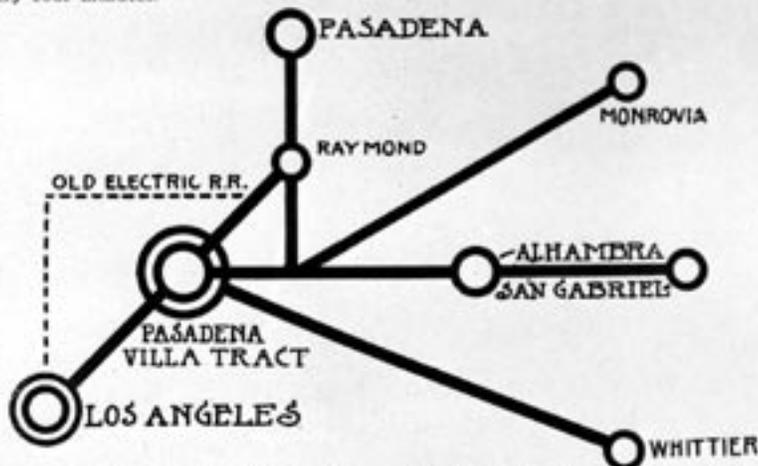
It is Situated Between Two Established and Growing Cities,—LOS ANGELES and PASADENA.

The new "Short Line" to Pasadena now open. The "Monrovia" Line will open in a few days. DIRT IS FLYING—RAILS ARE BEING LAID, SPIKES DRIVEN. We are now enjoying two Electric Lines to the Pasadena Tract.

JUST THINK! FIVE NEW ELECTRIC RAILWAYS WILL RUN THROUGH THIS BEAUTIFUL TRACT. If each of the five lines runs a car every twenty minutes, it means a car through the tract every four minutes.

We will select  
choice lots for  
non-residents.

Remittances can be  
made by express, postal  
money order or  
check.



Among our purchasers are the following leading citizens: H. E. Huntington, Vice-President of the Southern Pacific Railroad Company; L. T. Garnsey, President of the Los Angeles and Redondo Railway Company; W. H. Carlson, ex-United States Special Commissioner of Railroads of Cuba; Baird Brothers, wholesale commission merchants; J. G. Estudillo, ex-State Treasurer of California; F. H. Dixon, ex-State Harbor Commissioner, Dr. Wm. Dodge, Dr. J. E. Cowles, and others.

**CARLSON INVESTMENT COMPANY,**  
114 South Broadway, Los Angeles, Cal.

## INTRODUCTION

The January 1903 newspaper advertisement on the opposite page seems to say it all about how the new “Red Cars” had begun to change the Los Angeles region. “Dirt is flying – rails are being laid, spikes driven” extols the Carlson Investment Company’s ad for the new Pasadena Villa Tract (located in what is today El Sereno on the border between Los Angeles and South Pasadena). PE “Five” 226 is featured prominently and the ad stresses the building of the new electric lines as the transformative agent for the property being offered. “Just think, five new electric railways will run through this beautiful tract....it means a car through the tract every four minutes”. “Prices will soon be advanced, better buy now!” The development of the Los Angeles area had begun on a grand scale and Henry Huntington’s land holdings and his Pacific Electric Railway were a major force in the process. Huntington’s success in buying land and dividing it into building lots are well documented in other works, although as this ad illustrates, he was not the only investor making money on developing land adjacent to the new Red Car routes.

The PE 500-Class cars which are the subject of this book were divided into two basic groups of fifty cars each, the “Small” Fives, or 500s, ultimately numbered 500-549, and the “Big” Fives, or 550s, numbered 550-599. The Fives were the first new interurban cars purchased by Huntington and the Pacific Electric, and the first interurbans in Southern California to be built to standard gauge. Built in three groups beginning in 1902, they were used for light interurban and suburban service<sup>1</sup>. They embodied all of the unique trademarks of early Southern California electric car design, including an open-air section and five-window ends with distinctive curved corner glass<sup>2</sup>. These same design elements were subsequently applied to hundreds of PE and Los Angeles Railway (LARy) cars in the ensuing decades, becoming something of a trademark and earning the design its “Huntington” nickname.

The PE made numerous improvements to the original group of 1902 cars, culminating in a second batch of twenty updated cars being ordered in 1909. The company was evidently pleased with the refined design, as it was used as a pattern for completely rebuilding a group of fifty older cars in 1912, creating the 550-Class. All of the cars were visually very similar, and unlike many of their contemporaries, all retained their open sections until retired. A 1922 article on equipment assignments in the *Pacific Electric Magazine* described the Fives as general-purpose utility cars:

“The 500-class cars, being smaller and lighter are used for short haul suburban service where frequent stops make high speed impossible and are used as general utility cars to meet emergencies in all class of service.”

The 500s thus played a pioneering role in the development of the Los Angeles region we know today. Although orders for bigger, faster interurban cars followed almost immediately, the ground-breaking 500s were none-the-less significant in their own right. Not only did they open many of the early PE interurban routes, but 100 years later they became the subject of perhaps the ultimate tribute; two new full-sized operating replicas built for operation on part of an old PE route in the Los Angeles Harbor area. In addition to these two new replicas, several original 500s survive today at the Orange Empire Railway Museum in Perris, California.

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<sup>1</sup> The “Suburban” designation for the Fives is PE’s own. The company officially classified its cars as either City, Suburban or Interurban.

<sup>2</sup> Based on available information the first use of the five-window front with curved corner glass dates to the Pasadena & Los Angeles cars of 1894. The same styling appeared on cars built for the Los Angeles Pacific in 1895. (Both these properties were controlled by Clark & Sherman management).

## **Timeline of the Pacific Electric and the 500-Class Cars**

### **1900**

- 1901- Huntington interests incorporate the Pacific Electric Railway. Cars 200-229 (later 500-529) built by St. Louis Car Co.
- 1905- PE opens downtown terminal building at 6<sup>th</sup> and Main streets.
- 1907- Southern Pacific enters the interurban rail business in competition with Huntington.
- 1907-10 PE rebuilds the 200-class with multiple unit control and braking equipment, a new steel underframe and couplers, improved trucks, and closed wood sides in their open sections.
- 1909- Cars 230-249 (later 530-549) built by St. Louis Car Company, based on the recently upgraded cars 200-229.

### **1910**

- 1910- Huntington decides to exit the interurban rail business.
- 1911- The “Great Merger”; Southern Pacific buys out Huntington and consolidates all but one of the region’s interurbans into a greatly expanded Pacific Electric. In exchange, Huntington gains control of LA’s local streetcar system.
- 1912- Cars 200-249 are renumbered as 500-549 as part of a system-wide renumbering. The 550 class is also created that year, rebuilt by PE from the 1905-vintage LAP 200-class.
- 1913- Vineyard wreck- a tragic collision between two PE trains of wooden cars convinces PE to stop building wooden cars. The first steel-bodied city cars arrive that same year.

### **1920**

- 1924- Peak of PE pre-war ridership, over 109 million riders.
- 1925- PE Subway opens in downtown Los Angeles.
- 1926- PE route mileage reaches its peak.
- 1929- U. S. Stock Market crashes. The “Great Depression” begins. Use of the 500s begins a major decline.

### **1930**

- 1934- Majority of the PE 500s are retired.
- 1936- Remaining 500s retired.
- 1939- All but two 550s retired. PE begins modernization campaign, substituting bus service on many routes, retiring its oldest cars and modernizing many others.

### **1940**

- 1940- Last two 550s retired. PE purchases its last new railcars, 30 modern PCC cars for use in upgrading its Glendale - Burbank Line.
- 1941- US enters World War II.
- 1945- Peak of ridership on the PE, nearly 180 million riders.
- 1946- PE remodels the “Blimps” for continued service. They become the mainstay of PE’s postwar interurban fleet.

### **1950**

- 1950- PE retires the last of its wooden rolling stock from passenger service, along with many steel interurban cars.
- 1951- The last survivor of the 500-class, service car 1422 (formerly PE 544) is retired. Rail passenger service ends on PE’s remaining Northern District lines.
- 1953- PE sells passenger service to Metropolitan Coach Lines.
- 1958- Operation of the remaining ex-PE rail passenger routes passes to the newly formed state agency, LAMTA.
- 1959- LAMTA discontinues ex-PE rail passenger service to San Pedro.

### **1960**

- 1961- Last remnant of PE rail passenger service, the Long Beach Line, is abandoned by LAMTA. The line will be resurrected in 1990 as the first segment of a new rail transit system.

See  
**SOUTHERN  
CALIFORNIA  
By TROLLEY**

*Via*  
the Special-Arranged Trolley Trips  
through the Sunny  
Scenic Southland



**PACIFIC ELECTRIC RAILWAY**  
LOS ANGELES CALIFORNIA



For a brief period before the old Pasadena & Los Angeles interurban line to Pasadena was converted to standard gauge in 1903, a group of nine 200s operated as narrow gauge cars. Pictures of the cars in this service are understandably rare, but the third car in from the right in this circa 1903 view on Spring Street is believed to be one of them. A parade seems to have stalled this line of northbound cars between 3rd and 4th Streets. Sandwiched in among the long line of Los Angeles Railway cars, the 200-class car is signed up for Pasadena. No doubt the crew and passengers are looking forward to some more spirited running nearer their destination. *(ERHA-SC Ray Younghans Collection, OERM Library)*

At left, car 220 is pictured at Second and Spring Streets in downtown Los Angeles, March 1903. *(H. C. Jagger photo, OERM Collection)*

# Chapter One

## Old PE Days: 1902-1911

The PE 500s were divided into two subclasses. The first group, subsequently dubbed “Baby Fives”<sup>3</sup>, was built for the PE in 1902 as cars 200-229 (a.k.a. “200s” for the period 1902-1911). These cars were part of an order placed with the St. Louis Car Company by the Huntington interests<sup>4</sup> on October 30<sup>th</sup>, 1901. This equipment order was apparently one of the earliest transactions of the new Pacific Electric Railway of California, whose incorporation papers were dated only one day before, on October 29<sup>th</sup>. This order also included thirty city cars for the Los Angeles Railway (LARy) as well as five PE city cars (the first five of what later became the PE’s 200-class city cars). All 65 cars of this 1901 order were similar in overall size and had a number of common design elements, including five-window “Huntington” ends and open sections with wire mesh sides. As was common practice for the PE and LARy, cars 200-229 were ordered from the builder without electrical and air brake equipment, which was instead applied at the joint PE/LARy shops in Los Angeles<sup>5</sup>. The PE also supplied the trucks for cars 200-229.

The first official PE roster that listed cars 200-229 was dated September 25, 1902<sup>6</sup>, although a number of the cars were pressed into service before

this date for use on the Long Beach Line, which opened on July 4, 1902. The September 1902 roster shows the cars assigned to the company’s three main interurban lines, the standard gauge lines to Long Beach and Alhambra and the old Pasadena & Los Angeles narrow-gauge interurban line to Pasadena via Garvanza (later PE’s South Pasadena Line). Nine cars, (Nos. 215-223) were equipped with narrow-gauge trucks for the Pasadena service<sup>7</sup>. When the Pasadena line was rebuilt as standard-gauge in 1903, it is believed that cars 215-223 were then converted to standard gauge cars. No record exists of any 200s being used on the former California-Pacific San Pedro line, which was the only other narrow gauge interurban line being operated by the PE in this era.

All but three cars were equipped with two 50-horsepower motors, while cars 200, 201 and 209 apparently received four 50 horsepower motors<sup>8</sup>. The arrival of the 200s predated the use of multiple unit control on the PE by four years, so all were initially capable only of single-unit operation, utilizing K control and a Christensen straight-air brake system. The cars were equipped with a drawbar-type coupler, should towing become necessary due to a mechanical

**Car 201 at Long Beach in 1904, still carrying the original style of buffer at the car ends. The more familiar wide semi-circular buffer was not added until the cars were rebuilt with radial couplers for MU operation.**

*(CraigRasmussen Collection)*

