

Southern Pacific (Pacific Lines) McKeen Cars

The Southern Pacific owned a total of 49 Gasoline Motor and Trailer cars that were products of the McKeen Motor Car Company of Omaha, Nebraska. If the five Texas and New Orleans McKeens are also included, this would account for approximately one-half the total output of the McKeen plant. (Detailed records of the T&NO cars are not immediately available, hence they are not included in this discussion.) The SP purchased 39 motor cars and ten trailers; the motors being divided into 23 of the shorter, 55-foot long all-passenger (some with smoking section) type, and 16 of the 70-foot combination passenger, smoking, baggage and mail variety. The shorter cars were delivered in 1908, 1909 and 1910; the longer ones in 1910 and 1911. All trailers were received in late 1908 and early 1909. The last three cars, two "long" motors and a trailer were finally vacated in 1939.

The first nine motors and all trailers were delivered with road numbers that matched their McKeen builder's numbers (20, 23-30), at least in the case of the motors; but all were quickly changed to the 1-17 (odd only) and 2-20 (even only) series which set the pattern for all following additions. The only exception was motor 50, acquired from the FCdeSonora of Mexico, a subsidiary. There is little evidence to suggest that this car operated on the Pacific Lines after its 1911 addition.

There were seven or eight cars that corporately belonged to the Central Pacific, three Oregon and California, one "Oregon Lines" and four Arizona Eastern. The remainder belonged to the Southern Pacific Railroad, rather than the "Company." It is presumed that most, if not all, of the former carried the initials of the subsidiary near their numbers and "Southern Pacific" on the letterboards.

Nine motor cars and six trailers were received at Sacramento in late 1908 to begin the fleet, with 13 motors and the remaining four trailers the following year; eight motors in 1910; and a final nine motors in 1911. All were set up at Sacramento, with the exception of cars 41, 63 and 65 at Portland; #50 at Empalme, Mexico; #67 by predecessor Salem, Falls City and Western at Salem or Gerlinger, Oregon; and Arizona Eastern 69, 71, 73 and 75 presumably at some point in Arizona.

All motor cars had a "standard" McKeen 200 horsepower gasoline engine powering a "maximum traction" lead truck with 33-inch and 42-inch pairs of wheels. At least the first three trailers were originally delivered with 4-wheel, single trucks; but these were quickly replaced. The trailers initially had both baggage and mail facilities, but three (#14, 16 and 20) had their mail equipment removed; then all the trailers save one were dismantled or sold by 1920. With the exception of motors 1, 3, 7, 19 and 35, the gasoline engines were converted to burn distillate fuel during 1914-1916. Similarly, all the motor cars delivered with mail compartments had these facilities removed 1916-1920, with the exception of #55, and #45, which had mail equipment reinstalled in 1931 for Sacramento-Colfax/Placerville service. The lone surviving trailer, 14, reportedly accompanied #45 in these duties until at least 1933.

All the motors apparently received large, locomotive-type headlights at an early date; as well as train number indicators, which were applied to all except numbers 3, 7, 15, 17, 31, 51 and 63.

During the period that mail equipment was being removed from the 70-foot cars, three of the shorter motors had these facilities added, numbers 27, 29 and 31; however they were soon rebuilt again in 1918-1919.

Cars 27-33, 37-49 and 51-61 had an extra window added to their engine room compartments while at Sacramento for shopping 1915-1919. It is not known whether this was done for ventilation and/or vision reasons, or for some other purpose.

Records suggest that at least the earlier cars were delivered in some color other than the then-standard Pullman Green. Records for cars 1, 5, 6, 9, 14-16, 20, 29, 31, 35 and 57 carry the notation that they were painted "Pullman color" at various dates between 1910 and 1912. Picture postcards of the period show the cars in a maroon or tuscan shade, and while they are of course hand-tinted, the artists must have had some mutual inspiration to use a similar hue. It is reported that early Union Pacific McKeen cars were maroon...

The three cars noted above as having had mail apartments added, 27, 29 and 31; were at the same time "stretched" from 55 to 70 feet in length to permit this addition, as well as a baggage area, which apparently used some of the former passenger compartment. This work was done at Sacramento in early 1917. When next changed the mail apartment must have been used as the baggage section, since seating capacity was restored to near what it originally ^{had} been when the cars were strictly passenger.

While McKeens were primarily used in Oregon, central California and eastern Arizona; they did see service in other areas, and the summaries of shopping records included in the roster will offer some clues as to these locations and periods. The roster was compiled from the original "shop cards," but it is not known exactly what criteria determined the entries, nor how complete they may be.

The fact that the McKeen car was not entirely satisfactory is attested to by the rather rapid and early retirement dates: 12 motors were written off in 1920, plus two more were destroyed by fire. Six more were retired during the 'twenties; and eight in 1934, many of which apparently had not seen service for several years. 1935-36 claimed 7 more motors, plus two whose disposition is not recorded; leaving only motors 45 and 61, plus trailer 14. The other trailers had been retired or sold by 1920. The McKeen era on the Southern Pacific ended with the retirement of the last three cars in January, 1939.

Key to Roster symbols and abbreviations:

Initial: SP-Southern Pacific, CP-Central Pacific, O&C-Oregon and California, AE-Arizona Eastern, SFC&W-Salem, Falls City and Western, FCdeS- Sonora Railway of Mexico.

Type: P-Passenger, S-Smoker, B-Baggage, M-Mail, T-Trailer.

Shops: Bkn-Brooklyn (Portland) Oregon, Sac-Sacramento General Shop, Bkf-Bakersfield, LA- Los Angeles, Tuc-Tucson, Arizona.

SOUTHERN PACIFIC McKEEN GASOLINE MOTOR & TRAILER CARS 1908-1939 (Pacific Lines ONLY)

Number Init.	Orig. Number	Date & Changed	Floor Plan #	Lth.	Seats	Date Rc'd.	In Svc.	*	McKeen# Body/Eng	Shopping History		Off Roster	
										Type			
CP	1	20	3/1/09	136	55-2	72	10/13/08	10/20/08	PS	20	20	Sac '09, LA '10-12	12/21
SP	2	T-10	1/30/09	143	31-0	--	10/3/08	?	BM/T	?	--	Sac '09 Delivered with single 4-wheel truck.	1/20
SP	3	23	3/17/09	135	55-2	71	9/5/08	9/8/08	P	23	23	Sac '09-13	Dis. Sac 2/23
SP	4	T-11	11/30/08	143	31-0	--	10/3/08	?	BM/T	?	--	Sac '08-11 Delivered with single 4-wheel truck. Body used as Oil House-Motor Car Shop.	Dis. 6/18
SP	5	24	4/27/09	135	55-2	71	9/5/08	9/10/08	P	24	24	Sac '09, LA '10-17.	Dis. Sac 2/23
CP	6	T-12	1/30/09	143	31-0	--	10/3/08	?	BM/T	?	--	Sac '09-11 Delivered with single 4-wheel truck. Body used as Tool House-Motor Car Shop.	Dis. 6/18
SP	7	25	3/17/09	?	55-2	71	9/5/08	9/13/08	P	25	25	Bkf '09, Sac '10-13 Damaged by fire, Fresno 10/5/09; repaired Sac 3/10.	12/21
SP	8	T-13	1/13/09	?	31-0	--	12/23/08	?	BM/T	?	--	Sac '09. Sold 8/14/09 to Mari- May have been delivered with single 4-wheel truck. copa & Phoenix, #1. Later became Arizona Eastern #8. Retired 11/25	11/25
SP	9	26	3/23/09	105	55-2	72	9/5/08	9/16/08	P	26	26	Sac '09-17 Laid up 6/28/17-7/28/17 due to accident.	5/23
SP	10	T-14 (1st)?	1/13/09	?	31-0	--	12/23/08	?	BM/T	?	--	Sac '09. Sold 8/14/09 to Mari- May have been delivered with single 4-wheel truck. copa & Phoenix, #2. Later became Arizona Eastern #10. Retired _____	_____
SP	11	27	4/16/09	?	55-2	71	9/5/08	?	P	27	27?	Bkf '09.	Burned 10/11/12.
SP	12	T-15	1/13/09	?	31-0	--	12/23/08	?	BM/T	?	--	Sac '09, LA '10. Sold to Oregon Short Line/UP 6/18/11.	6/18/11
SP	13	28	3/31/09	135	55-2	71	9/5/08	9/20/08	P	28	28	Sac '09-15.	5/23

Number	Orig.#	Changed	F.P.	Lth.	Seat	DateRcd.	In Svc.	Type	Body/Eng	Shopping History	OffRoster
SP 14	T-14 (2nd)?	3/1/09	<u>143</u> <u>175</u>	31-0	--	2/15/09	?	BM/T B/T--	? --	Sac '09-32. Postal removed Sac 5/11.	Broken up Sac 1/20/39
CP 15	29	4/2/09	135	55-2	71	10/13/08	10/23/08	P	29 29	Sac '09-16.	2/23
SP 16	T-16	3/1/09	<u>143</u> <u>175</u>	31-0	--	2/13/09	?	BM/T B/T--	? --	Sac '11-22. (Laid Aside 3/31/20 Postal removed Sac 5/11. (Restored 7/1/22 (Sold to SF Napa & Calistoga #55 2/28/27	
CP 17	30	2/13/09	135	55-2	71	10/13/08	11/25/08	P	30 30	Sac '09-15	Dism. Sacto 2/23
SP 18	T-18	3/1/09	143	31-0	--	2/13/09	?	BM/T	? --	Sac '09. Sold FCdeSonora	8/27/09
SP 19	same		134	55-6	69	2/25/09	3/16/09	PS	33 31	Sac '11-18.	11/23
										Rear pilot added 2/12. Eng removed & trucks changed Sac 6/28/18; then sent to Mare Island for service as trailer. Returned by 7/20.	
SP 20	T-20	3/1/09	<u>143</u> <u>175</u>	31-0	--	2/13/09	?	BM/T B/T--	? --	Sac '09-13, Bkn '16. Postal removed Sac 4/11. (SecHse Port. Div.	3/20
SP 21	same		134	55-6	69	2/25/09	3/16/09	PS	34 34	LA '11-14.	6/25
SP 23	same		128	55-6	70	2/25/09	3/18/09	P	35 35	LA '13-15.	5/23
SP 25	same		134	55-6	69	2/25/09	3/3/09	PS	36 36	Sac '10-12. Bkn '16, '24, Dallas (Ore.) '21-23.	?
SP 27	same		<u>134</u> ?	<u>55-6</u> 70-0	<u>69</u> <u>46</u> <u>62</u>	3/27/09	3/30/09	PS PBM-- PB--	37 37	Sac '09-18, Tracy '15, Fno- Sac 2/24/17. ('18, LA '19, Dallas '23/24 Fresno 1/21/18. (Sac '22, Bkn '24, Sac '26.	4/36
SP 29	same		<u>134</u> ?	<u>55-6</u> 70-0	<u>69</u> ? <u>62</u>	3/27/09	4/3/09	PS PBM-- PSB-- PBM--	38 ?	Sac '09-12, Bkn '12,13, Broken Up Sac 6/5/17. Sac '17-29. (Sac 12/18/36 Sac 3/7/19. Sac 5/26/20.	
SP 31	same		<u>134</u> ?	<u>55-6</u> 70-0	<u>69</u> ? <u>62</u>	9/9/09	--	PS PBM-- PSB--		Sac '11-18, Dallas '22-25, 7/17(Albany (Ore) '24, Sac '26-27. Sac 10/5/18.	4/36
SP 33	same		134	55-6	69	9/9/09	--	PS	45 51	Sac '10-18.	6/25
										Eng removed & trail truck from #21 added Sac 6/28/18 for Mare Isl. Returned by 7/20.	
SP 35	same		134	55-6	69	2/23/10	--	PS	46 66	Sac '10, LA '11-14.	11/23
										Eng removed & spare trail truck added Sac 6/28/18 for Mare Island. Returned by 7/20.	

Number	Orig.#	Changed	F.P.	Lth.	Seat	Date Rcd.	In Svc.	Type	Body/Eng	Shopping History	Off Roster	
SP 37	same		?	70-0	62	4/26/10	4/30/10	PSBM	71 74	Sac '11-28. PSB-- Sac 9/20/19.	4/36	
SP 39	same		?	70-0	<u>62</u> ? ? <u>62</u> <u>52</u>	4/26/10	4/30/10	PSBM	72 75	Sac '11-31, Tucson '20, 25. PSB--Tuc 5/6/20. PSBM--Sac 2/20/26. PBM--Sac 7/10/26. PB--Sac 4/30/31; Mail fixtures to #45.	Broken Up Sac 12/16/36	
Authorized to be converted to Gas-Electric 10/27- not done.												
O&C 41 SP	same	To 'SP' 4/17/29?	?	55-6	<u>66</u> ? <u>47</u>	11/10/09) (at Portland)	?	PS	62 57	Bkn '09-17, Sac '17, P(S?)B--Bkn 4/29/12. (Benson (Az.) PB--Sac 8/23/17. (1/22, LA 2/22,	Broken Up Sac 12/16/36	
Leased to Tonopah & Goldfield ca. 1932; returned _____.												
SP 43	same			<u>146</u> ?	70-0	<u>62</u> 62	12/22/10	--	PSBM	92 92	Sac '11-31. PSB--Sac 1/17/19. Gas Explosion 2/31.	6/36
Leased to Tonopah & Goldfield 7/25/31(?) - 12/31/31; replaced by #41? Returned _____.												
SP 45	same			146	70-0	<u>62</u> ? <u>49</u> <u>39</u>	10/9/10	?	PSBM	93 70	Sac '11-32. PSM--Sac 12/31/25. PSB--Sac 9/21/27. PBM--Sac 4/30/31; Mail fixtures from #39.	Vacated 1/39
SP 47	same			146	70-0	<u>62</u> 62	1/31/11	?	PSBM	94 102	Sac '11-14, Tuc '15, PSB--Sac 3/16/18. (Sac '16-19, Bkf '19, (Sac '19-27, LA '29-30.	4/36
Mail equipment to #57, Tucson 2/15.												
SP 49	same			146	70-0	<u>62</u> 62	1/31/11	?	PSBM	95 103	Sac '11-28, LA '22-24, 31, Broken PSB--Sac 2/20/19. (Calexico '32, (Up Calexico (Tucson '33. (12/17/36	
SP 50	FCdeSonora #50.		?	55-2	71	8/19/09 at Empalme, Mex.	?	P	?	?	Tucson 3/10.	?
Date of acquisition (if any) and disposition unknown. Unknown if used on Pacific Lines.												
SP 51	same			146	70-0	<u>62</u> ?	2/27/11	?	PSBM	96 104	Sac '11-27, Bkn '16, PSB--Sac 5/9/19. (Nogales '23, LA (Up Calexico (24-30. (12/17/36	Broken (12/17/36
SP 53	same			146	70-0	<u>62</u> ?	2/27/11	?	PSBM	97 105	Sac '11-18, Dallas '22-26. PSB--Sac 3/8/18. Conv. to storehouse (Bkn?)	7/35

Number	Orig.#	Changed	F.P.	Lth.	Seat	DateRcd.	InSvc.	Type	Body/Eng	Shopping History	Off Roster
CP 55			<u>146</u> ?	70-0	<u>62</u> 70	3/10/11	?	PSBM	98 106	LA '11, Sac '19-20, Bkn '14-17, Dallas '18-27. PBM--Bkn 4/3/14. (Body conv. to storehouse-Bkn?)	7/35
CP 57 SP		To 'SP' 12/31/32?	<u>146</u> ?	70-0	<u>62</u> ?	3/10/11	?	PSBM	99 107	LA '11-14, Tuc '15, Bkf '19, (4/36 PSB--Fresno 1/14/18. (Sac '16-30.	
CP 59			<u>146</u> ?	70-0	<u>62</u> ?	3/10/11	?	PSBM	100 108	Sac '11-16, LA '18-19. Burned PSB--San Francisco 9/16.	1/19/21.
CP 61		To 'SP' 12/31/32	<u>146</u> ?	70-0	<u>62</u> ?	4/7/11	?	PSBM	101 109	Sac '11-30, Sparks '24-25. PSB--Sac 6/3/20.	Vacated 1/39.
O&C 63 SP	O&C 42	3/15/10	<u>?</u>	55-6	<u>75</u> 69	2/23/10 at Portland.	?	PS	64 67	Bkn '11-15, Albany '13. Sold to Conversion not recorded. (Dallas Machine and Engine #67 to OR&N (UP) car #601; replaced by #86 from Car #65. (Lumber Co. 4/21/23.	
O&C 65 SP	same?	To 'SP' 8/27?	<u>?</u>	70-0	86	9/7/10 at Portland.	?	PSB	79 86	Bkn '11-16, Dallas '17-26, (3/36 Sac '22, Albany '24. Rear pilot and whistle installed, Dallas 8/18/20.	
SP 67	SFC&W 1	Acq. 7/1/15; Changed 2/9/16	70-0	80	<u>?</u>	12/1/09 with SFC&W	?	PSB	<u>?</u> 57	Bkn '13-16, Dallas '17-27, Sac '23-24.	4/36
AE 69	AE 1	<u>?</u>	<u>?</u>	55-3	75	blt. 8/09	?	PS	<u>?</u> <u>?</u>	Body conv. to oil house Tucson Acquired 11/7/24, at Globe--unserviceable. At Phoenix 8/17/29. Not operated?	(1/35
AE 71	AE 2	<u>?</u>	<u>?</u>	55-3	75	blt. 8/09	?	PS	<u>?</u> <u>?</u>	Body conv. to oil house Tucson Acquired 11/7/24, at Globe--unserviceable. At Phoenix 8/17/29. Not operated?	(7/34
AE 73	AE 3	1/4/28 at Globe.	<u>?</u>	70-0?	51	blt. 1/11	?	PSBM	<u>?</u> <u>?</u>	El Paso 7/13. Authorized to be conv. to Gas-Electric 12/27. Not done.	Dism. after 8/30/30.
AE 75	AE 4	1/4/28 at Globe.	<u>?</u>	70-0?	51	blt. 7/10	?	PSBM	<u>?</u> <u>?</u>	El Paso 7/13. At Globe 8/17/29.	5/31

1001
1002

INTORBR
DESTROYED
6008 AZ 1/10/28