

Los Angeles - Historic Homes, etc.

LANDMARKS OF LOS ANGELES

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The celebration of the one hundred and fiftieth anniversary of the founding of Los Angeles has aroused an interest in the historic background of our City.

About the Plaza is a group of old buildings some of which are over a century old. The Plaza Church on North Main Street is the oldest building we have. It was first blessed as a chapel in 1784 and dedicated to La Nuestra Senora la Reyna de Los Angeles (Our Lady the Queen of the Angels). When it became too small for the congregation the present building was designed. The corner stone for this building was laid and blessed in 1814 by Fr. Luis Gil y Taboada. The Missions donated cattle, brandy and wines which were sold to pay for the labor. These articles were the only mediums of exchange in those days and adobe was the only material used in building. The church had a dirt floor pounded very hard, there were no seats and the roof was plastered over with brea from the Brea Pits. It was dedicated December 8th, 1822. Many changes have taken place since then. The front wall which was of adobe was replaced with one of brick, the belfrey was for many years a basket-shaped tower but has been rebuilt into a design more fitting the shape of the building. The changes have given the edifice a well groomed appearance yet it remains worthy of its antiquity.

Nearby is Olvera Street, a street of Yesterday. It has become the Mexican Mart of Today. This street was named for Judge Augustin Olvera one of the signers of the Treaty of Gauenga, that most importa

document that was signed at Campo de Cauenga by Gen. Andres Pico and Lt-Col. John C. Fremont January 13th, 1847 whereby California became an American province. Judge Olvera came to California in 1834 with the Hajar-Padres-Bandini colonization colony. His home in later years was on the site where the Community Church now stands, facing Marchesault Street and the Plaza.

On the South side of the Plaza is the Pico House, the first commodious Hotel to be built in Los Angeles. It was built in 1869 by Gov. Pio Pico and his brother Gen. Andres Pico, the cost being \$32,585. It is a three story brick building with an outside plaster surface with deep arched windows and doors. The Pico House was the terminus of the Banning stages from Wilmington.

Adjoining the Pico House to the north is Mercedes Theatre, the first Los Angeles theater, built in 1870 by William Abbott and named for his wife Dona Mercedes Garcia Abbott.

Next to this building is the first Masonic Temple of Los Angeles. It is in interesting contrast with the modern Temple at Jefferson and Royal streets which cost a million or more.

On the east side of the Plaza Nos. 516-22 is the old Lugo House. It was built in the 30's by Don Vicente Lugo who married Senorita Andrea Alisteros, whose father lived in the adjoining house toward the south. In later years the Lugo house was used as the St. Vincent college and many of the young men of that day received their education at St. Vincents, and well remember when the dormer windows were added to ventilate the dormitories. It is a two story adobe building almost entirely encased in thin wooden boards. The second story extends over the sidewalk.

In Olvera Street, now generally called El Paseo de Los Angeles, is the famous Avila House, headquarters of Commodore Robert Field Stockton.

ing his short stay in Los Angeles in 1847. It was built about the same time as the Plaza church. Much has been written and said about the history of the buildings on El Paseo de Los Angeles; about the Anconí winery, now a popular Cafe; the Sepulveda House, now an artists colony and other old buildings now converted into shops and theatres. On the north west corner of El Paseo facing the Plaza was a luxurious Monte Carlo equipped with elaborate gambling rooms, a warming patio with flowers, trees and shrubs. It was Casa de Seguro built in 1844 by a retired Captain who left the service of Gen. Shaeltoreno that he might live in Los Angeles and conduct a gambling house. In 1855 the place was sold by Seguro to D. Downey who sold it to John Jones in 1868. A portion of the house still stands and is occupied as an unattractive rooming house of no consideration.

On North Broadway No. 649 is the Casa de Don Rafael Gallardo who became alcalde or mayor of Los Angeles by appointment of Gov. Pio Pico. When the Americans took Los Angeles and an election was held, Gallardo became one of the first councilmen under American rule. This was his home. On January 16th, 1860 the property was purchased by Juan Ducou for the sum of \$458.

No. 463 North Broadway is an interesting old adobe that stands on a Spanish land grant given to the grandfather of Don Felipe Talamantes. Talamantes sold it in 1864 to Mariano G. Santa Cruz. It has a fine row of corridors across the front and a generous patio in the rear.

Valesco Adobe house at the foot of Fort Moore on North Broadway at sunset is an interesting old building. In 1850 Jesus Manso came from Mexico and engaged in making adobe bricks. He built this house for Don Valesco whose grandson still owns the place. Indians camped

the back yard and made the adobe bricks on the place.

Fort Moore was built on the hill over looking the Plaza Church. The first 4th of July celebration was held here in 1847 when the Fort was dedicated in honor of Capt. Benjamin Moore who was killed at the battle of San Pasqual December 6th, 1846.

The United States Hotel No. 138 North Main Street, is the oldest of the hotel buildings in Los Angeles. Originally it was a one story adobe of many rambling rooms about a patio. In 1864 Louis Mesmer purchased the land upon which the adobe stood from Juan N. Padilla and built the present three story building. Mr. Mesmer had a mighty Oregon oak tree brought down the coast by Phineas Banning in his steamer and erected it in front of the U. S. Hotel to be used as a flag pole. The pole bent with the weight of the flag and was soon replaced with a shorter and stouter pole. The remains of this pole still stands as a landmark near the hotel.

In the south part of town there are several interesting old ranch houses that have been preserved and give a pleasing impression of the early day home. "La Cienega O Paso de la Tijera" now used as the clubhouse for the Sunset Golf Club at Vernon Ave. and Crenshaw Boulevard is one of them. This was the home of Don Vicente Sanchez, elector and alcalde or mayor of Los Angeles. Another, is the "Centinela" ranch house at Inglewood, a lovely old place with interesting history. It was the home of Don Ygnacio Machado, from him it passed to Bruno Avila and in 1856 was sold at public auction for \$2,000 to Hillard P. Dorsey. After it became the property of Sir Robert Burnett a baronet of Scotland he brought the Mexican hacienda into charming condition as a country estate. He leased it in 1875 to Mrs. Freeman with right to purchase. An interesting stipulation in the purchase agreement was that Mrs. Freeman

required to plant 1,500 gum and pepper trees to protect the young
and from the winds and they must be planted before January 1st, 1880.
overlooks the Mines Aviation Fields and belongs to the Los
Extension Co. There are other interesting Landmarks of Los
enough is as good as a feast.

- part of the original land grant made by the King of Spain for the Pueblo of Los Angeles 1781. It was reserved as a public Plaza at the time the Plaza Church of Our Lady of the Angels was built at this location 1814.
- Yanga-na - The site of the Indian village of Yanga-na was on the east banks of Los Angeles river about where Aliso Street meets the river.
- Camino Real, - the road from Mission San Gabriel Arcangel made the crossing of the river at the ford where the Macy St. bridge now stands. This bridge was built and dedicated to the memory of Fr. Junipero Serra, founder of the Missions, El Camino Real entered Los Angeles at this fording point.
- Plaza Church, Nuestra Senora la Reina de Los Angeles, founded 1784, relocated at the present site 1814, completed and dedicated anew to Our Lady the Queen of the Angels December 8th, 1822.
- Paseo de Los Angeles - Olvera Street, north of the Plaza, -- "The Street of Yesterday" is the Mexican Mart of Today.
- Avila House, - No. 14-16-18 Olvera St. is one of the oldest adobes of Los Angeles. It was built about the same time that the Plaza Church was relocated on the west side of the Plaza. It was the home of Don Francisco and Dona Encarnacion Avila. During the American occupation of Los Angeles in 1847 this house was used as headquarters by Commodore Robert Field Stockton U. S. N.
- Pelanconi House, - No. 35 El Paseo de Los Angeles, is one of the first burnt brick houses built in Los Angeles. It was built about 1850-2 was used as a winery and residence by Mr. Pelanconi, now it is a Cafe, - Casa Golandrina where Mexican food is served in most attractive style.
- Sepulveda, No. 23 El Paseo de Los Angeles, an old brick structure of the period of 1850's is now used as shops of varied and interesting kind.
- Seguro, - corner of El Paseo and Marchesault Street was built in 1844 by a retired soldier who served under Manuel Micheltoreno and retired that he might build a gambling house in Los Angeles. It became known as the Monte Carlo of the West. Beautiful gardens, spacious patio and numerous rooms made it an attractive place. But few of the original rooms remain. It is unattractive.
- College House, - No. 516-22 East side of the Plaza, the first two story building of Los Angeles, built about 1838. It was used as the first college by St. Vincent's.
- Fremont Headquarters, corner of Aliso & Los Angeles Sts. formerly the Bell Row. Here Fremont dwelt during the time he was military Governor of California 1847.

St. Moore, - the hill on North Broadway. Here was held the first 4th of July celebration 1847. Named in honor of Capt. Benj. Moore killed in the Battle of San Pasqual.

Camino de Caballeros (El Camino Real de Los Angeles) leaving Castelar Street it trails nine miles through Elysian Park to Griffith Park. Reserved for horses only, no automobiles may use the road.

Stage Depot, - Roeder block just south of the Nadeau Hotel, where the overland stages stopped in Los Angeles.

St. Railroad Depot, Southwest corner of Commercial and Alameda Sts.

Banning Park, Wilmington, home of Gen. Phineas Banning, built in 1858, now a public memorial park.

War Barracks, Wilmington, No. 1010 Cary Ave., officers headquarters during the war 1861-5.

Quartermasters Bldg., Wilmington, near Canal St. and close to the Catalina dock.

Dominguez Ranch House, at Dominguez Junction on the road to San Pedro. On this hill the battle of Dominguez took place October 8th, 1846.

San Geronimo Rancho, home built by Don Juan Temple 1840. Now owned by the Bixbys. A charming example of early California ranch home but restored and changed to no advantage.

San Alamitos Rancho, Country home of Don Abel Stears, built in the early 30's, sold to the Bixbys and kept in good repair. Located east of Long Beach on the Anaheim Road.

Battlefield of the Mesa, - located in the Industrial District on Leonis Street and Downey Road. The Los Angeles Stock Yards Administration Bldg. stands upon the ground where this battle of the Mesa was fought. They have appropriately marked the place with a monument of granite boulders and fitting bronze tablets.

Peace de Cahuenga, No. 3719 Lankershim Blvd. opposite the Universal City Film Co. is the site where the Treaty of Cahuenga was signed January 13, 1847 by Gen. Andres Pico and Lt.-Col. John C. Fremont whereby California was surrendered by the California - Mexicans to the United States.

Lucas House, - at Downey on Downey Road and Baker Ave. The country home of Don Vicente Lugo. His son resides there.

City Hall, north Main St. stands upon the ground where the first City Hall was built by Don Juan Temple. It was used also as the court house.

Battlefield of San Gabriel, at Montebello, is the site where Commanders

Stockton and Kearney met the Californians January 30th, 1847. The site is unmarked but is at the river crossing where the Santa Fe R. R. bridge spans the river.

La Brea Hacienda -- the old ranch house has been restored and stands at 3rd and Fairfax. It is the residence of Mr. Earl C. Gilmore. This interesting ranch has upon it the Brea Pits from which the prehistoric remains have been excavated.

El Molino Viejo, near Huntington Hotel, at El Molino Viejo Station on the Pacific Electric R. R. -- is the first grist mill to be built in Southern California. It was built about 1818 and rebuilt so that it would work by Joseph Chapman in 1821. It has been greatly changed in the restoration.

El Ranchito, the home of Governor Pio Pico is at Pico two miles from Whittier. A charming old adobe of historic and artistic interest. It belongs to the State of California and preserved as a landmark.

"Mission Vieja" the site of the first building erected for Mission San Gabriel Arcangel, is a short distance from El Ranchito. The site has been marked by Mr. Walter Temple with a shaft and cross.

Adobe Flores, South Pasadena, foot of Raymond Hill, the ranch house where Gen. Flores retreated when he lost the battles of the Mesa and the San Gabriel January 1847.

Mission San Gabriel Arcangel, founded by Frs. Cambon and Somera September 8th, 1771.

Mission San Fernando Rey de Espania - founded September 8th, 1797 by Francisco Fermin Lasuen and Fr. Francisco Dumetz.

Memory Garden, - opposite Mission San Fernando, has the old fountain, a statue of Fr. Serra and many interesting trees, plants, memory benches and tablets.

Home of General Andres Pico, near Mission San Fernando has recently been restored. Gen. Pico signed the Treaty of Guadalupe which surrendered California to the United States.

Encino Rancho, - first site of Mission San Fernando Rey d'Españia. An interesting old ranch house is on the place also a modern building of wood.

Monument at Newhall, marks the site where Gen. Fremont camped January 11, 1847 on his way to meet Gen. Pico and receive his surrender.

Adobe Vieja - at 308 West Mission Blvd., San Gabriel, was built as residence for the padres, and is considered the oldest building in San Gabriel.

Old Grape Vine and adobe at San Gabriel is of interest because of its great size. It was transplanted there in 1861, by Mr. David Franklin Hall and Dr. George I. Rice.

- Santa Cruz Adobe - [illegible]
- Casa de Catalina Verdugo
to Montross.
- Casa Vieja de Lopez, [illegible]
- Adobe Vieja -- 308 [illegible]
our district
- Calabassas Stage station
- Alvarado Adobe - adjacent to [illegible]
Pomona -- [illegible]
- Adobe of Senora Palomares
- Adobe de Saturnino Carrillo
San Dimas
- La Cienega O Paso de la [illegible] (used as a Club [illegible] on [illegible] Avenue and [illegible] Boulevard)
- "Centinela" at Inglewood [illegible] nobleman and [illegible]
- Rocha Adobe at [illegible] owned by the Rocha family [illegible] in 1843, patented in 1863.
- First House built in Pasadena [illegible]

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