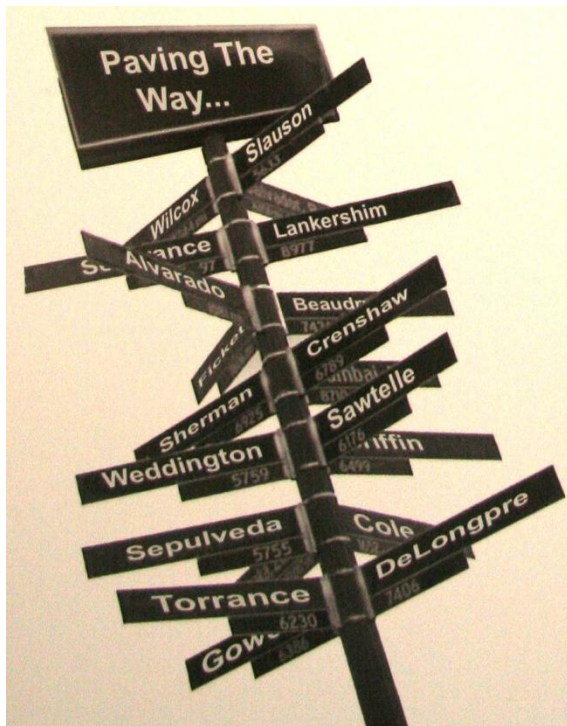


Many Roads, One Journey

There are probably hundreds of streets named for various individuals, some obscure, some noted. There are certainly far more than could ever be included in a single exhibit. What we have tried to do is offer a representative sampling of the diverse and fascinating people and their stories, those who created and developed Los Angeles. Although we say these names almost daily, we never stop to consider where they came from, yet we owe them a debt of gratitude. There are certainly many more, who, for various reasons or no reason at all, are not commemorated in this way. That doesn't make them less important, just not as obvious to the casual observer; but by learning the stories behind street names, we honor their contributions and history.

In the early days, as now, people came to Southern California for opportunities which didn't exist elsewhere, due then to the social structure of East Coast Society, which was still rigid and traditional: the lower and middle classes stayed lower and middle class and the upper class treated them both as second class. Even financial success didn't always buy social acceptance. The Nouveau riche—those who made big money in industry or earned money rather than inherited it—might have been tolerated, but they were not considered in the same league as those born with a Silver Spoon. Life—and status—was circumscribed from birth.



But in California, and especially Southern California, it was different. Far enough away from class distinctions and restrictions, a man was free to reinvent himself in a society that had no such confines. The only qualifications were ambition, enthusiasm, and hard work. The only questions asked were what skills, talents, or other abilities someone could offer to improve the city and the quality of life. Everything was needed and appreciated and all were welcome. There was a shared sense of purpose and a belief that what they were doing was important.

These contributions were real and lasting, and their achievements transcended ethnicity, status or wealth. People depended on each other for survival and did not have the "luxury" of exclusivity. Here, with hard work and perhaps a bit of luck, a man could become wealthy and prominent and exercise influence on civic development. Some went on to

play a key role in regional or State affairs. But as much as they benefited personally, there was also the feeling of shared commitment and belief in a better future for all. This, too, is reflected in the names of streets, as people were honored in that way for even small accomplishments that they knew would have an enduring effect, although they may not have known exactly how that would happen.

Of course not everyone enjoyed great success or even a lasting reputation. Fortunes were lost as well as made and many were forgotten as the city expanded and population increased. Newcomers supplanted the old-timers. In the March of Progress, little remains to tell of those early days. Although the people behind the street names created the foundation for Los Angeles, we don't always stop to appreciate their contributions—a legacy from which we continue to benefit.

We leave you with one final street name—one that is of great interest and importance to us at Heritage Square Museum. It is the one where this museum is located: Homer Street, named in 1912 for Homer Hamlin, a city engineer from 1904 to 1909. This reinforces the notion that the contributions made in the early years of the city were considered important at the time and that now, as then, deserve to be honored.

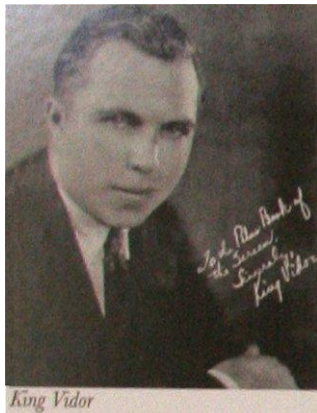
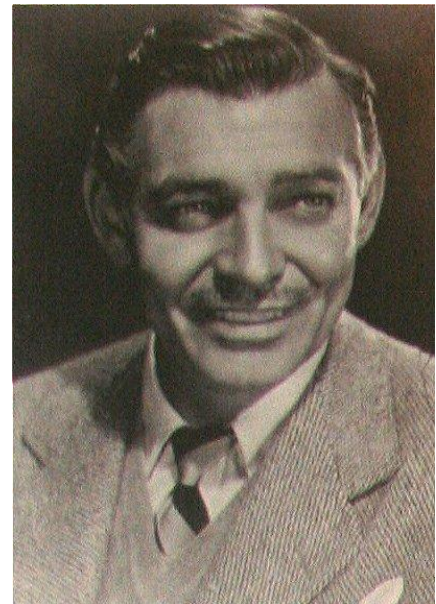
Navigating around greater Los Angeles can be challenging! The next time you are caught in traffic, instead of giving in to frustration, it might be more interesting to contemplate your location. You, too, can be on a first-name basis with our roads and boulevards.

The Movies

There have been many important actors, directors and producers whose influence has been widely felt in Los Angeles's keystone industry: The Movies. Certainly Los Angeles streets are paved with gold for many Silver Screen icons. Yet, for the most part, Tinseltown's street signs do not carry their names. It turns out that being a power player at the studio or a popular box office draw does not carve your name in curbside stone -- except, of course, on the Hollywood Walk of Fame.

Still, there are a handful of Los Angeles streets that do remember some of the industry's celebrated entertainers and Silver Screen stars. Many, if not most, of these byways mirror the location of the stars' famous and glamorous homes, and most were not denoted during their namesakes' lifetimes.

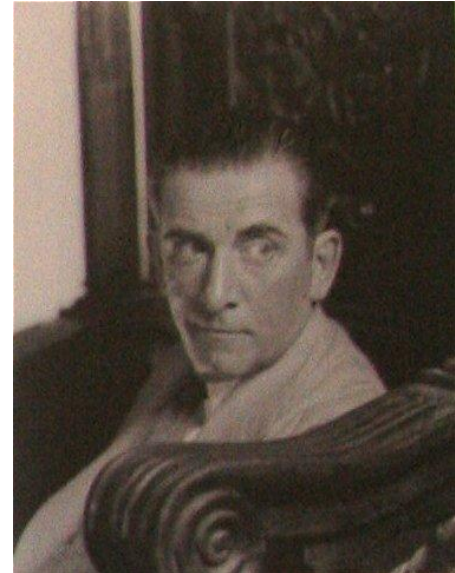
Clark Gable famously invested in San Fernando Valley property. He moved to his Encino ranch in 1939 with his beloved Carole Lombard, and lived there until his death, in 1960. *Ladies Home Journal* in May, 1940, reported that 'the Gable-Lombard ranch—any country establishment in California bigger than ten feet square is a 'ranch'—is twenty acres in size, with a main house, a small stable, a barn, a house for the hired farmer and his wife, and some chicken coops and brooders. Although close enough to Hollywood for convenience, the San Fernando Valley is regarded as remote. In the 1970s, the ranch was subdivided and developed into an exclusive compound called 'Clark Gable Estates.' Gable Drive is located nearby, west of the Encino Reservoir.



King Vidor made his debut as a movie director in 1913 with *Hurricane in Galveston*. Nearly a decade later, the successful *Peg o' My Heart* in 1922 earned Vidor a long-term contract with Goldwyn Studios. He thrived on the Talkies, and continued to make movies well into the 1950s. Some of his best known sound features include *Duel in the Sun*, *Stella Dallas*, *Our Daily Bread*, and *The fountainhead*. He was nominated five times for an Oscar but never won in direct competition. In 1979 Vidor was awarded an Honorary Oscar for Lifetime Achievement. Vidor invested his monies wisely, acquiring a wide swath of land in Benedict and Coldwater canyons (and erecting on a six-acre parcel a famed Wallace Neff mansion, now

demolished.) The street bearing his name, however, is in a less-luxurious section of city 'flats' not far from Roxbury Park.

Edward Everett Horton starred in many of the great madcap Hollywood comedies of the 1930s, most famously in the role of Professor Nick Potter in *Holiday* in 1930, and in the 1938 remake starring Katharine Hepburn and Carry Grant. Over a long career Horton had supporting roles in *The Front Page*, *The Gay Divorcee*, *Top Hat* (one of several Fred Astaire-Ginger Rogers films in which Horton appeared), *Here comes Mr. Jordan*, *Arsenic and Old Lace*, *Pocketful of Miracles*, and *It's a Mad, Mad, Mad, Mad World*. Shortly after he died in 1970, the city of Los Angeles renamed a portion of Amestoy Avenue, the street where he lived in Encino, Edward Everett Horton Lane.



Francis (Frantisek) Lederer was born in Czechoslovakia in 1899 and, becoming enamored of the acting life early, began touring in stage productions across Central Europe with actors like **Peter Lorreo**. In 1929, Lederer (now going by Franz) starred in the German silent movie, *Die Büchse der Pandora*. Though Lederer was now a top star in Germany he wanted to work in Hollywood—but needed to learn English first. His first American movies were light comedies, though later in his film career Lederer would play villains with equal aplomb. He also guest starred on TV in such shows as *The Untouchables*, *Ben Casey*, *Mission: Impossible*, *That Girl*, and *Night Gallery*. Lederer became very wealthy by investing in real estate, especially in Canoga Park, where he purchased 300 Ares near Sherman Way and Woodlake Avenue in 1934. He was active in civic affairs, philanthropy and politics. He served as a Parks Commissioner for the city, received awards for his beautification efforts, and was named honorary mayor of Canoga Park. **Lederer Avenue** runs through the West Valley.

Early in life, comic actor Eddie Anderson developed a gravel voice that would become his trademark to fame. As a vaudeville performer, he appeared at the Roxy and Apollo theaters in New York, and the Los Angeles Cotton Club in the west. A chance pairing with comedy star Jack Benny on his radio program in 1937 put him on the map. He only had a bit part on Benny's Easter show as a Pullman porter, but his scratchy voice, superb timing and comic reaction to Benny's banter earned him a fixed spot. He then was heard as Benny's personal valet, Rochester Van Jones, and the role became so popular that he became billed as **Eddie "Rochester" Anderson**. In between radio assignments, he found the time to appear in both film drama and comedies, including *You Can't Take It With You*, and three with Benny—*Man About Town*, *Buck Benny Rides Again*, and *Love Thy Neighbor*. Throughout his career, Anderson concentrated on his partnership with Jack Benny, following him into television and working with him for a total of 23 years. Anderson owned a Colonial style mansion in Southwest Los Angeles, and after his 1977 death the street it sits on was renamed **Rochester Circle**.



William Selig was a pioneer of the early days of cinema in Los Angeles. He had established the Selig Polyscope Co. in Chicago, in 1896, now considered one of the first motion picture studios in America. By 1910 Selig had expanded his operations to the Edendale section of Los Angeles (now Echo Park). Actor Tom Mix made his first films with Selig Polyscope. Five years later,

Selig created a zoo in Lincoln Heights, stocked with hundreds of animals he had collected for his studio's jungle pictures and cliffhangers. He also moved his film studio there. When Selig Polyscope was forced to shut down in 1918, Selig hung on to his zoo, with grand plans of making it into an amusement park. Unfortunately, the crowds of tourists never arrived, and Selig ultimately lost the zoo and other assets. But a street named in his honor remains in the neighborhood.

In the movie *Sunset Boulevard*, Gloria Swanson immortalized **Cecil B. DeMille** with the oft-repeated line, "All right, Mr. DeMille, I'm ready for my close-up." Cecile Blount DeMille was one of the first celebrity movie directors and was the most successful filmmaker in Hollywood history, with not one but two versions of *The Ten Commandments* to his credit. Out of the seventy films he claimed as his personal productions, all but six turned a profit, and he remained leading director of "A" list features from his first film in 1914, *The Squaw Man*, to his last in 1958. Demille was adept at directing "thousands of extras," and many of his pictures included spectacular set pieces, such as the parting of the Red Sea in both versions of *The Ten Commandments*. In 1953 he finally won an Academy Award for *The Greatest Show on Earth*. When he died in 1959, *The New York Times* said: "Cecil Blount De Mille was the Phineas T. Barnum of the movies—a showman extraordinary. A pioneer in the industry, he used the broad medium of the screen to interpret in 'colossal' and 'stupendous' spectacles the story of the Bible, the splendor that was Egypt, the glory that was Rome." For forty years, Demille lived at a grand estate in Los Feliz on the self-named **DeMille Drive**.

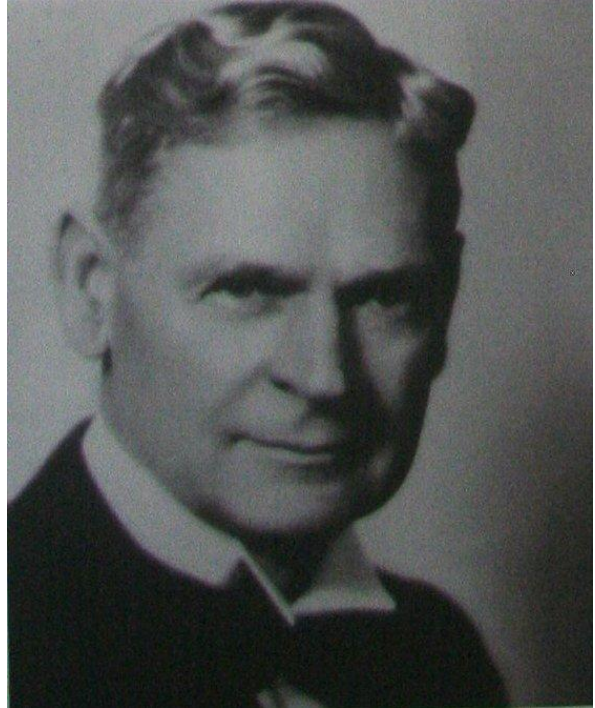


Known as "America's Sweetheart," "Little Mary" and the girl with the curls, **Mary Pickford** was one of early Hollywood's greatest pioneers. Pickford began her life of stage and screen at age six as "Baby Gladys," appearing in vaudeville sketches, melodramas, and road show productions that traveled through the northeastern United States. When she turned 15, Gladys traveled to New York to present herself to Broadway producer David Belasco, and changed her name to Mary Pickford. She became Biograph's indisputable star. By early 1916, Mary Pickford was making \$150,000 a year.

Pickford also became a producer and, ultimately, the person in charge of her own films. In 1919, with her paramour Douglas Fairbanks, Charlie Chaplin and D.W. Griffith, Pickford founded United Artists. Fairbanks, an actor upon the stage and screen, specialized in stunts, macho heroics, and self-deprecating humor. He is best known for his swashbuckling roles in silent films such as *The Thief of Bagdad*, *Robin Hood*, and *The Mark of Zorro*. Within a year Pickford and Fairbanks were married. Often referred to as "Hollywood Royalty," the couple presided over their affairs of state at Pickfair, their Tudor estate in Beverly Hills. Long after their divorce, Pickford continued to live at Pickfair, until her death in 1979. The fate of Pickfair is oft discussed. A mansion still stands at the top of **Pickfair Lane**, but it was (controversially) altered beyond recognition in 1989 by Pia Zadora and husband Meshulam Riklis. Two more roads stand in memory of "Little Mary," however: **Pickford Street** and **Pickford Place**, both in Mid-City, were named for the actress in 1921.

Movers and Shakers

William Paul Whitsett had a long and varied career. Born in 1875, he was younger than most of his associates, the early pioneers. Mining, irrigation, and real estate were some of the fields to which he brought his impressive skills. It was he who was responsible for promoting and organizing the new town of Van Nuys, which included commercial, residential and industrial infrastructure—including bringing water from the Owens Valley and later a critical member of the effort to bring water from the Colorado River. He served on the board of the Department of Water & Power and as first chairman of the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California. It is largely because of Whitsett that Los Angeles—and in particular the San Fernando Valley—experienced its massive post-War expansion. He died in 1965, having lived to see the realization of everyone's efforts.



Harry Chandler, like so many others, came from New Hampshire to Los Angeles in 1888 to recover from tuberculosis. While staying in a boarding house in downtown, he met the wife of a physician, Dr. Nichols. The doctor himself was suffering from a liver ailment and camping in the hills near Cahuenga Pass for the benefits of nature on his disease. Chandler joined him, and in the fresh air quickly recovered. Soon he began selling fruit that Nichols had grown to the residents of the Valley. Through this endeavor he became acquainted with Lankershim, Van Nuys, and others: within two years had saved \$3,000. Believing he was cured, he returned to New Hampshire, but it was quickly evident that the eastern climate had ill effects, and so he returned to Los Angeles. It was while selling fruit that he also established delivery routes for many of the city's newspapers, and so had already met General Harrison Gray Otis, editor of the Los Angeles Times. Otis liked Chandler, and so upon his return, Otis hired him to manage the paper's circulation. Harry married the boss's daughter, Marian, and became managing editor. Upon Otis's death in 1917, Chandler took over as publisher; under his direction it became a leading publication.

Like most of the men of this time, he did not limit himself to one enterprise—there were too many opportunities offered by the growing city for an enthusiastic and imaginative individual. His accomplishments number too many to mention all, but a brief sampling provides insight into his civic contributions: he was directly involved with founding the Hollywood Bowl, the Automobile Club of Southern California, Los Angeles Athletic Club, Santa Anita Park racetrack, Los Angeles Coliseum (and securing the 1932 Olympic Games), KHI Radio station, and many other businesses and institutions—more than 100.

At one time Chandler was the largest private landowner in the country, but he is perhaps best remembered for one real estate enterprise in particular: for one area he erected a sign with letters 50 feet tall spelling out the name of the subdivision: HOLLYWOODLAND. This was the start of the now world-famous "Hollywood" sign atop Mt. Lee, not far from Weid Canyon where, as a young TB patient, he had camped years before with Dr. Nichols. It is not a stretch to say that Harry Chandler was the leading citizen of Los Angeles during the first half of the 20th Century.

The names of another community and major thoroughfare which remain with us belong to another visionary of the 19th Century- that of **Isaac Newton Van Nuys**. Van Nuys was born of Dutch parents in New York, where his father was a farmer. Van Nuys the younger came to California at the age of 30.

The year was 1865, the Civil War was recently concluded, and the country was adapting to new attitudes and conditions. It was a period of growth for Southern California, where opportunity seemed unlimited and success almost guaranteed. The freedom and autonomy offered by a place with a small population, a lot of land, and a temperate climate was seductive. Released from the puritanical traditions of the older East Coast cities, free thinkers, progressives, the adventurous and the ambitious were attracted to Los Angeles where anything seemed possible. It was the beginning of what was to become the center for personal reinvention.

As the son of a farmer and already a successful entrepreneur himself, Van Nuys arrived with enough cash to become a partner with Lankershim and others in the purchase of the San Fernando Valley from Pio Pico. There he began raising livestock, then grain. Within a few years his company was producing flour, cracked wheat, and other wheat products. In the same year, 1880, he married Isaac Lankershim's daughter, Susanna. Among his many accomplishments he served as Vice President of the Farmer's & Merchant's Bank, as a director of Union Bank of Savings, as a director in the Los Angeles Pressed Brick Company, built the Van Nuys Hotel in downtown Los Angeles, and was a founder of the Hollywood Cemetery (now Hollywood Forever).

In 1911, as the area grew in population and urbanization, he and several well-known investors founded the town of Van Nuys, sub-divided his property in the Valley and began selling lots. He died in 1912, having realized not only his own dreams but having provided the foundation for the dreams of thousands

Among those earliest investors were **Harry Chandler, Willam Paul Whitsett, General Harrlson Gray Otis, Moses Hazoltine Sherman, Leslle C. Brand**, and others.

Sherman, as has already been noted, was instrumental in organizing and implementing the railway system throughout the area, which physically connected the various communities (Santa Monica, Sherman, Hollywood, Downtown, etc.) as they developed and made it possible for people to live in one area but comfortably and reliably access the rest of the region. Sherman Way and Hazeltine Avenue are both named for him.

Leslie Brand, of Glendale, was similarly engaged in streetcar development, and it was in both their interests to collaborate. **Charles Nordhoff** was also a railroad investor and promoter, but he was also a journalist and author. He was born in Prussia in 1830, emigrated to the United States in 1845 and was educated in Cincinnati. After nine years in the Navy and merchant services he worked for various newspaper offices and spent ten years on the staff of the New York Evening Post. In 1871 he traveled to both California and Hawaii and became a major booster for Los Angeles—one of his most important books was California for Health, Pleasure and Residence, which contributed greatly to marketing of the region.

Interestingly, Otis, although having been wealthy and influential, is not memorialized with a major boulevard, although there are many smaller streets which do bear his last name. However, his contributions were many and significant.

In 1869, **Wilson C. Weddington** arrived from Iowa to visit his sister, whose husband was the superintendent for the Lankershim Land and Water Company. Excited by the opportunities he saw, a year later he relocated permanently to the then town of Toluca. He purchased 22 acres, from approximately Riverside Drive to Lankershim Boulevard to the current **Weddington Street**. It didn't take long for him to become involved in developing the civic infrastructure of the area. The name of the community was changed to Lankershim, and Weddington was appointed postmaster. He ran the post office and a general store from his home on Lankershim at what is the current site of the El Portal Theater.

His two sons, Fred and Guy, were also engaged in developing the community. Fred was appointed as the first deputy sheriff, opened the first bank, and, not surprisingly, went on to become a real estate developer. Guy (along with other Valley owners) was heavily involved in Hollywood enterprises; he was a director of both Hollywood National Bank and Citizen's Savings Bank. The success of Hollywood was pivotal to the success of the Valley, so it made good business sense to participate and assist in their efforts as a way of protecting their own investments. However, there was more than a desire for profit; there was also an interest in creating a permanent legacy in the form of an important municipality. The Weddington Family donated land for many civic improvements, including the first fire department, post office, and park.

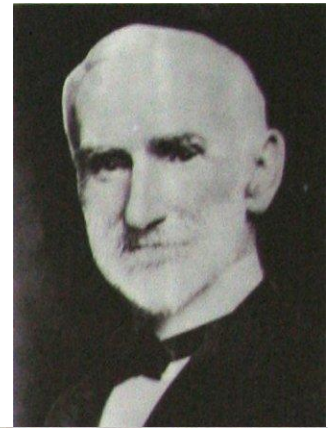
The names and stories of these men are among the most recognizable, but they are hardly the only ones who had a hand in determining the direction of greater Los Angeles, nor are they the only ones whose contributions are honored with street names. Amestoy was the last family to own the Encino Ranch: Henry T. Oxnard was a sugar beet farmer; Paul Shoop was Vice President of the Southern Pacific Railroad and President of the Pacific Electric Railway; Carl Rinaldi was a citrus grower with extensive holdings, as was Peter Lassen; Dr. Frederick Langdon served on the Los Angeles City Council from 1911-1923; Gordon Whitnall was an early director of city planning; Henry Harding was the surveyor for the original subdivision; Charles Maclay was a senator and part of the consortium which purchased the valley floor from Pico and his partner Don Eulogy De Celis. Frank Woodley was a state legislator in 1913; Captain Kittridge ran a Kittridge Hotel; Schyler Colfax, Sydney Van Noord, Walter M. Fulton, Fred Hartsook, and many, many others made lasting contributions which deserve lasting recognition.

San Fernando Valley

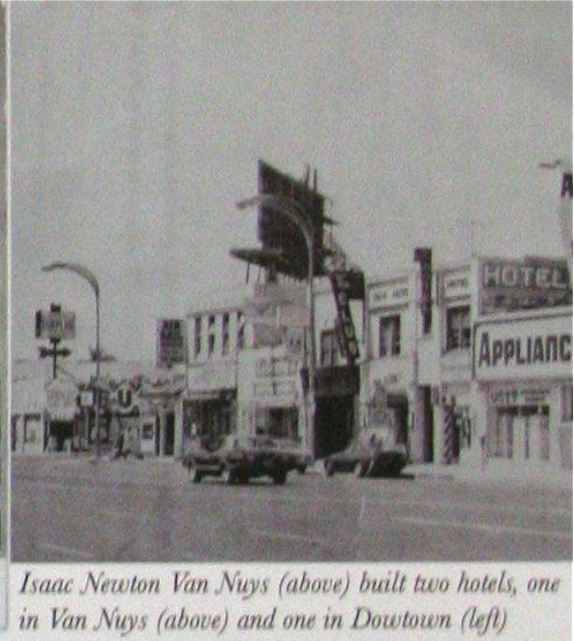
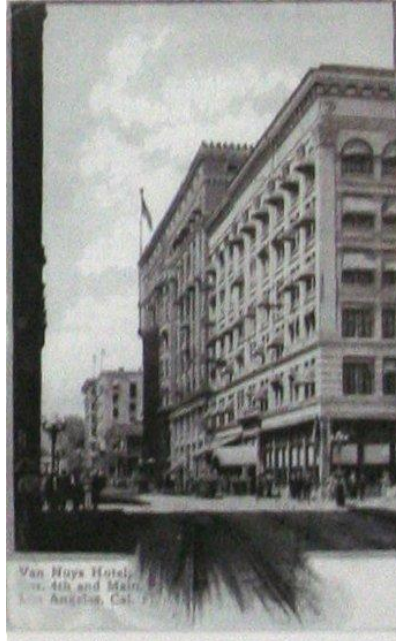
Development of the San Fernando Valley proved that expansion and suburbanization were the future for Los Angeles. South of the Santa Monica mountains, most of the land had been divided into the Mexican Ranchos and was still in the hands of its original owners or their descendants. Some portions had been sold off, subdivided, or developed. But it seemed to some to be too late to get in on the “ground floor,” so many of them went where there was less competition—the San Fernando Valley.

Certainly some early Spanish or Mexican grantees were there, too. One was Don Mariano Verdugo, but most of the area belonged to Gov. Pio Pico. In 1846, in order to raise funds to finance defense of the American invasion, he sold half of it for 11¢ an acre. Through his brother, he managed to re-acquire half of it, but in 1869, deeply in debt, he sold his interests to a group of investors for \$2.00 an acre. The Valley was quite literally split in half along a ploughed furrow which stretched the length of the valley floor, more or less the route of the current Roscoe Boulevard. In 1844 he owned what later became Universal City and it was he who built the Casa de Adobe de Cahuenga, which stands today near the subway entrance.

Leading the group who purchased from Pico was **Isaac Lankershim**. Prior to that he had purchased part of the old El Cajon Ranch and established a small township there. He envisioned the valley as an important connector between the City of Los Angeles and the northern routes. He entered into partnership with **Isaac Newton Van Nuys** (who had married Lankershim's daughter, Susanna) and together they began a farming empire which included wheat and barley. Growing older, Lankershim actually lived in downtown Los Angeles where he managed the grain mill while Van Nuys managed the farm production. Although Isaac Lankershim had secured the land, he passed away in 1892, leaving his son, **J. B. Lankershim** to continue to develop the



family's holdings and business interests. This J.B. certainly did. The town formerly known as Toluca was renamed Lankershim (and later, North Hollywood) and of course Lankershim Boulevard continues to be an important artery.



Isaac Newton Van Nuys (above) built two hotels, one in Van Nuys (above) and one in Downtown (left)

The story of the San Fernando Valley and Los Angeles would not be complete without a Brief mention of water. In this photograph high above the Valley, William Mulholland (center), Whitsett and Frank E. Weymouth, General Manager and Chief Engineer of the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California, survey their holdings. Mulholland was the architect of the plan to bring water from the Owens Valley, but there were many others involved in the effort, including Whitsett and Weymouth.

