Photographs of Los Angeles and Vicinity by W.H. Fletcher: Finding Aid

Finding aid prepared by Michelle Sanchez.
The Huntington Library, Art Collections, and Botanical Gardens
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Overview of the Collection

Title: Photographs of Los Angeles and Vicinity by W.H. Fletcher

Dates (inclusive): approximately 1880s-1890s

Collection Number: photCL 435

Creator: Fletcher, W. H. (William H.)

Extent: 25 photographs in 1 box; prints 12.5 x 19.5 cm (5 x 7.5 in.), mounts 14 x 22 cm (5 1/4 x 8 1/2 in.)

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Abstract: This collection of 25 William H. Fletcher commercial card photographs focus mainly on Los Angeles, California, during a period of industrial expansion and population growth in the late 1800s, with special attention on Los Angeles Street (which passes through Downtown Los Angeles) and what is now the Historic Core and Civic Center districts. There are also town and nature views of Pasadena, Santa Monica, Ventura, Redondo Beach, and Burbank. Images of Missions San Fernando Rey, San Luis Rey, and San Juan Capistrano are also included.

Language: English.

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Preferred Citation
Photographs of Los Angeles and Vicinity by W.H. Fletcher. The Huntington Library, San Marino, California.

Provenance
Purchased from Mead Kibbey on December 30, 1999

Biographical Note
William H. Fletcher was born in Hollis, New Hampshire, in 1838, shortly before his family moved to Lyndon, Vermont, that same year. He learned photography while working in the pharmaceutical and jewelry industries. Fletcher moved to Los Angeles, California, in 1885, planning to establish himself as a druggist; however, an overabundance of pharmacies obliged him to turn to photography. Fletcher went into commercial photography but did not establish a formal studio or gallery of his own. The subjects of his photographs focused on Los Angeles just when it began to expand with immigrants and new businesses. He also traveled through the areas surrounding Los Angeles, photographing scenes from San Pedro, Santa Monica, Redondo Beach, Pasadena, and Ventura, aiming to tempt New Englanders to vacation out west. Many of Fletcher’s photographs were sold as card photographs to curio dealers to sell to tourists. Sometime after 1900, Fletcher retired from professional photography and went into the oil business; he died in 1922.

Scope and Content of Collection
This collection of William H. Fletcher commercial card photographs focus mainly on Los Angeles, California, during a period of industrial expansion and population growth in the late 1800s. The images depict various views around Los Angeles, which include Los Angeles Street and some of its intersections, the Main and Spring Streets junction, Old Chinatown, the College of Medicine at University of Southern California (in its second incarnation on Buena Vista Street, now North Broadway), Llewellyn Iron Works, Elysian Park, the Hollenbeck Home for retirees, and what may be William H. Fletcher’s residence (see item 6). Also included are photographs of Colorado Boulevard, Fair Oaks Avenue, and Devil’s Gate in Pasadena; the Los Angeles River; the Hotel Arcadia in Santa Monica; the Point Fermin Lighthouse in San Pedro; Ventura; Redondo Beach; and the California missions San Luis Rey, San Juan Capistrano, and San Fernando Rey.

Indexing Terms
The following terms have been used to index the description of this collection in the Huntington Library’s Online Catalog.
California missions—Photographs.
City & town life—California—Los Angeles—1890-1900—Photographs.
Chinatown (Los Angeles, Calif.)—Photographs.
Gorges—Photographs.
Hotels—California—1870-1910—Photographs.
Llewellyn Iron Works—Photographs.
Parks—California—Los Angeles—Photographs.
Point Fermin Lighthouse—Photographs.
Rest homes—California—Los Angeles—Photographs.
San Fernando, Rey de España (Mission: San Fernando, Calif.)—Photographs.
San Luis Rey Mission (Calif.)—Photographs.
University of Southern California. College of Medicine—Photographs.
Burbank (Los Angeles County, Calif.)—Photographs.
Los Angeles (Calif.)—Photographs.
Los Angeles River (Calif.)—Photographs.
Pasadena (Calif.)—Photographs.
Redondo Beach (Calif.)—Photographs.
Santa Monica (Calif.)—Photographs.
Ventura (Calif.)—Photographs.
Aerial views.
Card photographs.
Cityscapes.
Photographs.

Box 1

Photographs

Box 1, Item 1  Junction of Main and Spring Streets, Los Angeles, Cal. ◆
Box 1, Item 2  Corner of Marchessault and Los Angeles Streets, L.A. ◆
Box 1, Item 3  Corner of Los Angeles and Aliso Streets. ◆
Box 1, Item 4  [Street view of Old Chinatown], [1888] ◆

Writing on back says "St. Vincent," possibly street name.

Box 1, Item 5  [Hollenbeck Residence, Los Angeles.] ◆
Box 1, Item 6  [View of a residence with the address number 312 on unidentified street in Los Angeles.] ◆

Possibly W.H. Fletcher’s home on 312 South Westlake Ave. Source: Los Angeles From the Mountains to the Sea. Volume 3. p. 704

Box 1, Item 7  [Looking north from Fort Hill. Llewellyn Iron Works—N.E. corner of North Main and East Redondo. Crescent Milling Co., College of Medicine, University of Southern California. 737 Buena Vista (Westside).] ◆
Box 1, Item 8  View from Court St., Los Angeles, 1886. ◆
Box 1, Item 9  View in Elysian Park, Los Angeles, California, 1894. ◆
Box 1, Item 10  Santa Monica from the Canyon. ◆
Box 1, Item 11  Wharf at Santa Monica, Cal. ◆
Box 1, Item 12  Hotel Arcadia, Santa Monica, Cal. ◆
Box 1, Item 13  Light House at Point Fermin [San Pedro] ◆
Box 1, Item 14  Center of Colorado St. and Raymond Ave., Pasadena. ◆
Box 1, Item 15  Colorado St, Pasadena. ◆
Box 1, Item 16  Fair Oaks Avenue, Pasadena. ◆
Box 1, Item 17  Devil’s Gate, Pasadena. ◆
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<th>Street view in Ventura, Cal.</th>
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<td>Redondo [Beach] [Street scene with store fronts]</td>
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<td>Los Angeles River, Burbank, Cal.</td>
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