
Preface 1941

A guide book to Los Angeles could not logically be limited to the corporate city, far-flung as it is. So limited it would cover San Fernando Mission and omit Mission San Gabriel, godmother of Los Angeles Pueblo; it would also eliminate the beaches and the mountain and desert resorts associated with the city's recreational life. For this reason, and because greater Los Angeles is pretty much a unit—economically as well as geographically—the area bounded by Malibu, Palm Springs, the beaches, and the mountain resorts has been described in this book.

From the gathering of the first field notes to the last mark of a blue pencil, the guide was constructed by a staff working under a co-operative arrangement. With few exceptions, no one person is responsible for the accuracy or mode of expression of any single page. One staff of workers has painstakingly poured over research material in libraries, interviewed many persons of various interests and occupations, covered hundreds of miles of highway and set down what was learned by personal observation. Another staff has checked and rechecked the work of the research staff. A third has written and rewritten the field material, shaping it into the final pattern.

The aim has been to present Los Angeles truthfully and objectively, neither glorifying it nor vilifying it. For many decades the city has suffered from journalistic superficiality; it has been lashed as a city of sin and cranks; it has also been strangled beneath a damp blanket of unrestrained eulogy. The book shows Los Angeles as a composite, a significant city, the fifth largest in the United States.

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