

# TWENTY-FIVE YEARS AGO CITY SAW REALTY SPURT

## Marked Start of Quarter-Century Cycle That Brought Phenomenal Development

BY MICHAEL JAY

'Twas only yesterday it seems, yet the yellowed calendars say that 1912 happened all of twenty-five years ago.

A memorable year, that one, for Los Angeles, from the standpoint of real-estate transactions as well as new construction. There was, in fact, such building activity that the common salutation became—"Be a great city, when they finish it."

Building permits in 1912 reached a then all-time high of \$31,367,995, a huge total for those days, yet just about one-half of the amount recorded for the city last year. But Los Angeles was learning more rapidly how to grow. The peak building activity came in the 1922-1927 span, with the top for any year, \$200,000,000, the total for 1923.

However, a review of the period 1911-12 in local real estate and construction history for comparison with 1936-37 enables forecasters clearly to perceive something significant. Even the layman, unaddicted to crystal gazing, may discern a similarity between the two periods in energy.

### TELLING THE WORLD

The real estate section of The Times of February 4, 1912, comprised fourteen pages. Additionally there were thirty-two pages of which a large part was devoted to real estate display and classified advertisements.

It was a time of vigorous slogans.

One of them was "Just Watch Los Angeles Grow!" The city's population then was about 400,000.

In that year Col. William May Garland forecast that Los Angeles would have a population of 1,000,000 in 1930. It was a good prediction, for in 1930 the census gave Los Angeles a population of 1,238,048.

Other slogans in 1912 were: "Prices are too high—but they'll go higher."

"Buy now before prices rise—and pay later."

"A corner lot will put you on easy street."

"Buy it anywhere, most anywhere, from the mountains to the sea."

The last slogan was so utterly typical of Los Angeles, no other community ever dared to use it.

### GROWING-UP DAYS

That's the way they talked in those days when Los Angeles was hustling itself out of swaddling clothes into more mature garments. The long march of retail business stores down Broadway swung westward into Seventh street. The Los Angeles Athletic Club made preparations to take over its new home on that thoroughfare. The Realty Board moved into its own building at 631 South Spring street. Arroyo Seco, with its 4416 acres, was annexed by the growing city.

One million bricks a day were being turned out by the yards in an effort to keep pace with the newly started tidal wave of construction.

Lands, buildings large and small, homes and hard money changed hands in rapid succession, as the following cross-section picture of the day shows:

A ninety-nine-year lease on a seventy-two-foot frontage on the north side of Seventh between Olive and Grand was obtained for a rental total of \$800,000, and plans for building were under way.

In an exclusive report. The Times told the sale of the southeast corner of Seventh and Olive for \$200,000.

Lots as low as \$1250 each in the Van Ness-avenue and Windsor Square area were advertised.

Twenty-eight acres surrounding a tract in Glendale were ac-

quired for \$42,000 for subdivision and development. The original tract was almost sold out, the final sales being a lot on Fair-oaks for \$475, a lot on Myrtle for \$550, and the northwest corner of Kenilworth and Myrtle for \$700.

One method of attracting buyers was to promise no interest or taxes during the life of the contract. Lots with these attractions for \$555 each and up, \$20 down and \$10 a month, were advertised in the West Adams and Washington Boulevard area.

### AT THE SHORE

There were bargains, too, at the beach. Two lots on Venice avenue were sold for \$450 each.

A tract reached by Grand avenue-West Forty-eighth street trolley out to Denker avenue, Gramercy Place or Arlington street, was advertised with appeal to home buyers in a hurry. "Even the Shades Are Up," said the announcement of one company. Added inducement was the free use of the lot next to the house for two years and an option on it at the existent price. Lots ranged from \$950 up.

Lots in the Mt. Washington area were advertised "free of fog and dust," and "six times higher than the Union Trust Building."

In that day, too, it was a novelty for many to ride in an automobile. So free auto trips were offered to prospective buyers of lots in the new town of Van Nuys. These trips could be obtained by simply clipping from an advertisement the picture of a baggage check.

### EL SEGUNDO RISES

An oil company erected a refinery and El Segundo came into being. Lots in the vicinity for \$350 and up were obtainable from the company that announced also a huge development project in a locality within the limits of the Shoe String Strip of Los Angeles.

Seven hundred lots at \$700 each was the message for an area between Santa Barbara, Western, Vermont and Arlington.

Little dreaming of the oil field to be found in the area, one firm cautioned readers of their announcement to be sure and see Athens-on-the-Hill, on Harbor Boulevard, before buying elsewhere.

For \$100 down and \$30 a month, the home lover was invited to move into a new house in an area reached by taking the Vermont car to Seventy-sixth street.

A square between Vermont and Hoover, Forty-first street and Santa Barbara, had lots for \$1300 each.

Out toward Hollywood way on Mariposa just north of Melrose, a lot was sold for \$1900.

### LARGE TRACT BOUGHT

Somewhat briefly, considering the amount involved, the news was given that the 500 acres of Cienega de La Tijera, located to the southwest of the city, had been bought from the estate of E. J. Baldwin and Earl B. Elder for \$1,250,000.

Santa Monica, meanwhile was a parade leader in the Los Angeles basin with more than a dozen individual tract projects and developments. All were advertised as being easily reached from the city by "glass-like boulevards," which description should bring a smile to all who drove autos out that way in those dear old days.

## New Subdivision for San Fernando Area

Comprising approximately forty acres, a new San Fernando Valley subdivision is being opened this week-end by Edgar Selecman, realty dealer.

The new development marks the forty-third San Fernando Valley tract placed on the market under Mr. Selecman's direction, aside from Granada Orange Estates.

The new project, divided into country homesites and small suburban farms, fronts on Roscoe Boulevard, about a mile and a half northwest of the town of Reseda.

## Two Residences Contracted for; Another Planned

Award of contracts for two residences and completion of plans and specifications for a two-story, twelve-room residence to be built on Comstock avenue, Westwood, for Floyd C. Fisher at a cost of \$30,000 have been announced by Architect Allen Ruoff.

Contract has been awarded for a ten-room, two-story \$18,000 residence at 259 Tilden avenue, Westwood, for Irving K. Moran. Contract also has been let for a two-story eight-room dwelling to be built on Glenroy avenue, Westwood, for W. Allen Taylor.

## Garage to Be Built

A one-story, \$17,500 garage building will be erected at 5733 Crenshaw Boulevard, for the Angeles Mesa Land Company. Norstrom & Anderson are the architects.

## New Home to Rise for Veteran Suburban Paper

The Eagle Rock Sentinel, one of the oldest weekly newspapers in suburban Los Angeles, has launched construction of a modern streamlined newspaper building. It will be forty by 100 feet, fronting on Colorado Boulevard, directly across from the City Hall, and will have modernistic features with the front of the building mainly of glass.

The new building will have twice the floor space now occupied by the Sentinel.

The newspaper is owned and managed by H. A. Lawson and his son, D. H. Lawson. They purchased it five years ago, following their arrival in Los Angeles from Boise, Idaho.

Mr. Lawson is president of the Eagle Rock Chamber of Commerce, president of the metropolitan Los Angeles unit of the California Newspaper Publishers Association and president of the Los Angeles Newspaper Service Bureau.

## North Hollywood Court Projected

A \$20,000 bungalow court is to be built at 4400 Vineland avenue, North Hollywood, for R. W. Denaple. It will comprise twenty-nine rooms divided into nine separate units.