



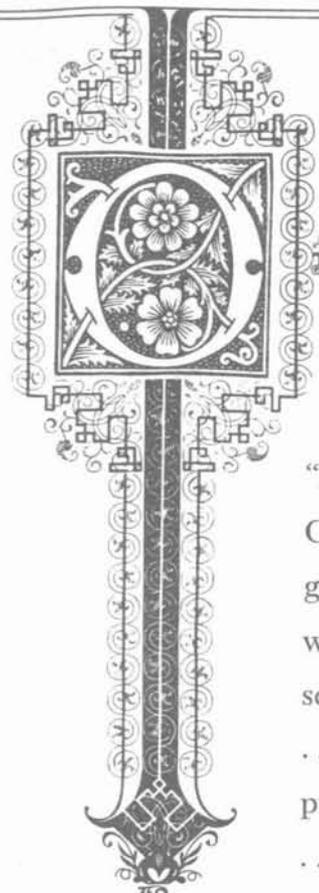
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ORANGE
COUNTY
(REF. DRAWER)



Orange County

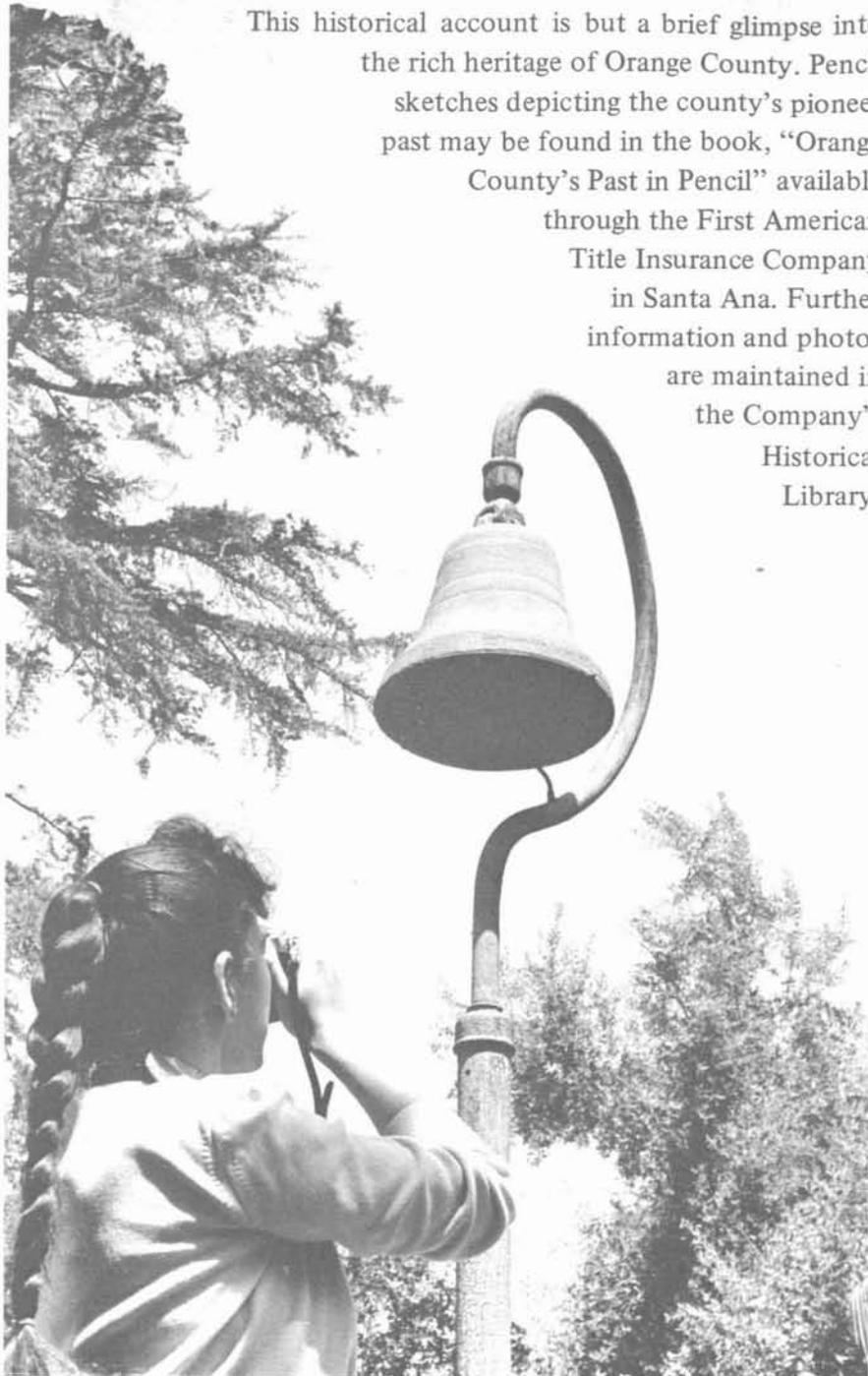
“... the only romantic spot in California... there was a grandeur in everything around, which gave a solemnity to the scene: a silence and solitariness... no sound heard but the pulsations of the great Pacific... as refreshing as a great rock in a weary land.”

— Richard Henry Dana, Jr.
1835

HISTORICAL HIGHLIGHTS

SERVING TITLE INSURANCE NEEDS THROUGHOUT THE UNITED STATES

This historical account is but a brief glimpse into the rich heritage of Orange County. Pencil sketches depicting the county's pioneer past may be found in the book, "Orange County's Past in Pencil" available through the First American Title Insurance Company in Santa Ana. Further information and photos are maintained in the Company's Historical Library.



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First American Title Insurance Company
Santa Ana, California



Orange County is like a bejeweled grande dame, replete with memories of a colorful past. Her domain ranges from the Santiago Mountains in the east to the Pacific Ocean in the west. She reflects back to the day when the first Indians arrived on her wide plains more than 2,000 years ago. These migratory people had slowly filtered south after having earlier crossed the Bering Straits from Asia.

Indians in Orange County were among the 23,500 Californians using languages belonging to the Shoshonean linguistic group, linked to such far-flung tribes as the Comanche of the plains and the Aztec of Mexico. Local tribes spoke dialects which even varied from one village to the next. They had no written language and, in contrast to their distant relatives, were passive and backward. They lived in tule-thatched huts shaped like half an orange, called wickiups.

Natives of the Santa Ana Valley were later classified by the Spaniards according to the mission which had jurisdiction over their area. Indians north of Aliso Creek were Gabrielinos, included in the domain of Mission San Gabriel. Villages south of Aliso Creek and north of Canyon de Las Pulgas were Juanenos because of their



connection with Mission San Juan Capistrano.

Physically, local Indians have been pictured as being short and dark skinned with flat noses and long straight hair. Early missionaries were shocked, as the men were notable for their lack of any attire, while women, slightly more modest, wore two-piece aprons fashioned of grass fibers or other material.

Acorns, which grew in great abundance, provided a basic dietary staple. Tribes migrated to certain areas where oak trees were plentiful for acorn harvesting.



The dozens of mortars hewn out of large stones in Black Star Canyon give concrete evidence of this practice. Mortars, both single and communal, were used as bowls in which to pulverize the acorns. The meal was then leached and cooked into a mush.

Indians had great respect for everything they found in nature. To them, the sun and the great redwood trees were very important. Some believed that in the beginning there was a Sky father and an Earth mother. From these two came all things. The Eagle was the maker and "good chief" of all and the Coyote with his sly ways was the "evil one." The Indians thought the mountains and the streams had "spirits" in them, both good and bad. They remembered these things when they wandered in the mountains or by the rivers.

All ceremonies were held outdoors in a reverent, respectful manner. The audience could only whisper.

No hunter could eat his own fish or game. Two braves went together so they could exchange their catch. Those who did not do this would either have bad luck or die.

Many unusual artifacts have been found in Costa Mesa between the Estancia Adobe and the Mesa Verde Country Club. Most of them are presumed to be ceremonial items, although skulls and fragments of pottery also have been unearthed.

Plummet stones have been discovered near the site of the San Joaquin Ranch home, northeast of Upper Newport Harbor; one was found many years ago near the Santa Ana River at the First Street crossing. Most of the plummets were located near the Estancia. One theory is that the plummets were used as charm stones, worn on a string around the neck. Another assumption is that they were tied to fish nets and used as "sinkers."

A stone wand also was found. This was thought to be a ceremonial wand, about eight inches long and one inch wide at the blunt end, which tapered down to a rounded point. It was made of white materials and limestone and showed great workmanship.

The Indians' serene existence was interrupted in July 1769 by an event which changed the course of California history. This was the arrival of Don Gaspar de Portola and his Spanish expedition of 67 men and 104 mules. Spain's purpose in sending this expedition into California was two-fold – first, to assure dominion and control by the Spanish government over the new territory and second, to bring the message of Christianity to the pagan Indians.

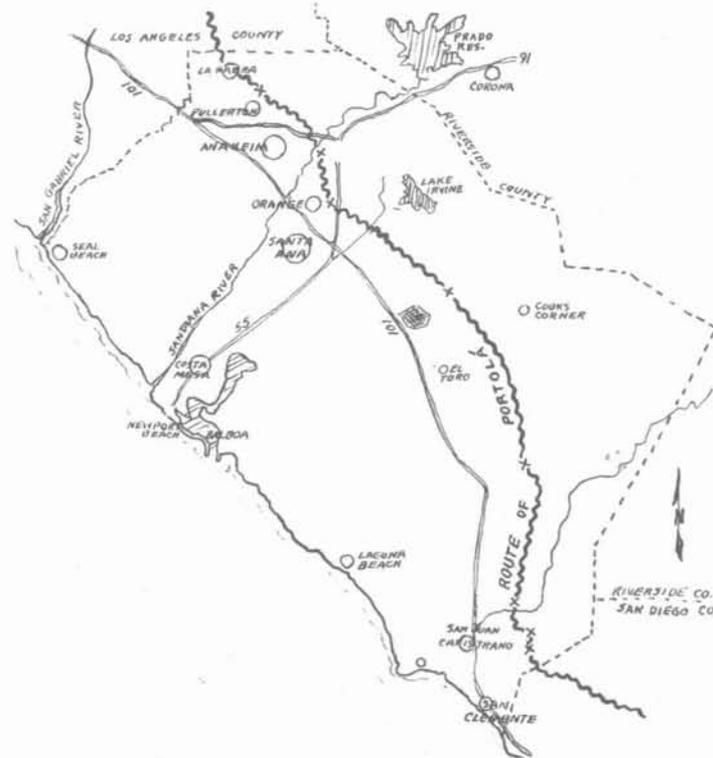
Entering Orange County on July 22 near present-day San Clemente, Portola's band came upon an Indian village where there were two sick baby girls. Priests accompanying the expedition baptized the dying babies Marie Magdalena and Margarita. These were the first Christian baptisms in California, now commemorated by avenues named for them in San Clemente and by a state

historical marker. In July of each year La Christianitos Festival honors this great event.

During their week-long march across Orange County, the Spaniards left other permanent names. On July 25 a soldier lost his blunderbuss or trabuco during an encampment and gave the name Trabuco to the surrounding canyon.

The Trabuco Mesa camp, which can be approached from the south by Gubernadora Canyon, was probably near the Trabuco adobe on the eastern edge of the Plano Trabuco. The mesa was lush with springs, blackberries, poison oak, oak, sycamore, coffee berry and willow. Growth was so abundant that the beautiful spot was described by Father Palou as looking "like a fig orchard." The adobe was occupied from the early 1830's to about 1900 and almost all traces of previous Indian habitation have disappeared.

July 26 found the party traveling on to the Tomato Springs area, which is now Irvine Ranch. It lies in the lowest foothills of the Santa Ana Mountains north of Lambert Reservoir and above El Toro Marine Base. One hundred years ago, approximately 150 Indians occupied the area above the springs. The many manos, hammerstones and metates found in this area verify the tribe's existence.



The next day, July 27, they camped on the east bank of the creek, in the area now known as Chapman and Walnut Avenues. Father Crespi, one of the priests, wrote in his diary that the area was full of willows, grapevines and brambles.

The following day, the Feast of St. Ann, the Franciscans and soldiers designated the valley that lay before them "Santa Ana." Near noon on July 28,

they arrived at a river. Father Crespi later wrote that at that very moment a violent earthquake struck and the river was thus proclaimed Rio de Los Dulcine Nombre de Jesus de Los Temblores – River of the Sweet Name of Jesus of the Earthquakes.

Continuing on through lower Brea Canyon and La Habra Valley, the expedition rode north out of Orange County. Their path became the original El Camino Real – the King's Highway. Portola was so unimpressed by California as a whole that he returned to Spain at the earliest opportunity and apparently had no desire to see Alta California again.

No permanent settlement was established in Orange County until Father Junipero Serra founded Mission San Juan Capistrano on November 1, 1776. He gave it the name of San Juan Capistrano de Quanis Savit in honor of an Italian priest Saint Giovanni Capistran. The name also referred to a nearby Indian village believed to have stood on the grounds of present-day San Juan Capistrano High School.

The old original mission site, almost four miles up San Juan Canyon from San Juan Capistrano, is located on a sandy bank raised about eight feet above the present bed of San Juan Creek and a short distance west of the creek. The building, which was of sun-dried adobe, burnt adobe bricks and roof tiles, has long since disappeared. Many plowings have left only a low mound in a field strewn with broken brick and tile and occasional bits of old china, glass and wood.

Later, the mission compound, located at the present site, grew adobe by adobe. A great stone church was started in 1797 and completed in 1806. It housed living quarters, a blacksmith shop, a cannery, a wine press, warehouses and other buildings, all within the grounds. It was designed to be completely self sufficient.

Irrigation ditches brought water from San Juan Creek to feed vegetable gardens, orchards and the vineyards, one of which was shaped in the form of a Roman cross. The missionaries imported and made known to the natives many domestic plants and animals of Spain and the Mediterranean region. Among them were oranges and grapes.

Disaster struck December 8, 1812, during the first mass when a violent



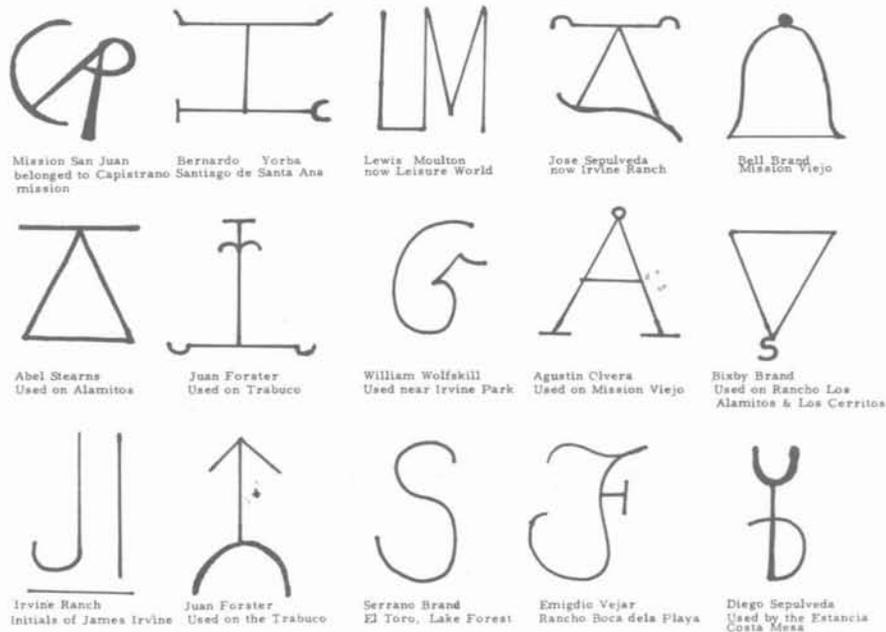
earthquake rocked all of California. In seconds the work of years was destroyed. The church tower fell and the roof collapsed, causing the death of approximately 40 Indians who were attending the service. Ruins of the large white church still stand to greet the famous swallows each year on March 19th, an event heralded by an annual festival.

Another tragedy at the mission occurred when the Argentine pirate, Hippolyte Bouchard, arrived in 1818. He and his men looted the mission, drank the wine and departed.

In 1821 Mexico, including California, gained its independence from Spain. During turbulent political times in California, the governor of Alta California, Jose Figueroa, ordered the missions secularized in 1834, freeing the Indians from further service to the missions and directing the Franciscans to relinquish control of mission property to secular clergy. Later the mission buildings and adjoining grounds were restored to the Roman Catholic Church in a bill signed by President Abraham Lincoln in March, 1865, one month before his death.

The signing of this bill marked the beginning of the great rancho period. Eleven ranchos encompassed most of the county, granted either by the king of Spain or the Mexican government over a span of years. They introduced an era of feudal splendor to Orange County. Raising longhorn cattle for their hides and tallow, rancheros lived casual lives, served by an army of vaqueros and other retainers.

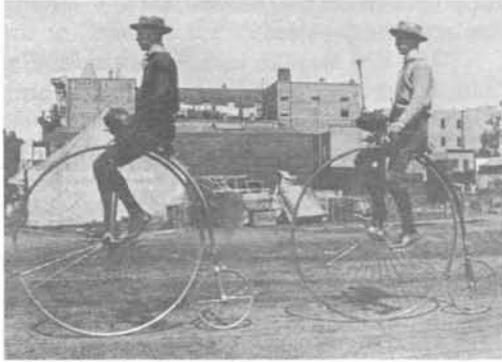
HISTORIC BRANDS OF ORANGE COUNTY



Discovery of gold, the Mexican War and admission of California as the 30th state of the Union foretold an end of the rancho era, for by 1850 many thousands of new immigrants were arriving in the "Golden Land" every year.

In the early 1860's a severe drought struck all of Southern California. Cattle died by the hundreds and land-poor rancheros borrowed money at five per cent interest compounded monthly from unscrupulous gringo money-lenders, soon losing their land through foreclosure.

Northern sheep ranchers came south to buy land cheaply. James Irvine, Sr., and his business partners, Flint, Bixby and Co., bought the original 97,000 acres of the Irvine Ranch for \$25,000. James Irvine, Jr., eventually acquired the Irvine Ranch from his father. He first arrived in Orange County from San Francisco via bicycle, followed by his good friend, Harry Bechtel, founder of the Bechtel Engineering Corporation.



Descendants of rancheros, numbering in the hundreds, partitioned their ranchos and sold them to land speculators and others who, in effect, became founders of early Orange County towns.

Anaheim was founded in 1857 by a group of German immigrants from San Francisco who called themselves the Los Angeles Vineyard Society. They developed the area so thoroughly that at one time Anaheim was the largest wine-producing center in the state. At the turn of the century, Los Angeles Street, pictured here, was a dirt road travelled by horses, wagons and horseless carriages.



Abel Stearns, a native of Massachusetts, arrived in California in 1831 and became a familiar money-lender in the Southland. He soon owned most of the western part of the county. Such cities as Buena Park, Stanton, Cypress, Westminster, Garden Grove and Huntington Beach are now located within the former Stearns Rancho Trust.



Main Street, Tustin

Columbus Tustin, a successful "49'er," bought land near the Irvine Ranch in 1867 and plotted his Tustin City. William H. Spurgeon, another argonaut, purchased land in the once great Rancho Santiago de Santa Ana for his new town of Santa Ana.

In 1870 Westminster, a neighboring community of Anaheim, was formed as a Presbyterian temperance colony. Orange was subdivided by two Los Angeles attorneys, Chapman and Glassell, who had represented the heirs of one ranchero in the partitioning of Rancho Santiago de Santa Ana and received a portion of their legal fees in land.

The focal point of Orange — The Plaza is shown here in a 1920's photograph. The fountain was moved to Hart Park in Orange, about 1931.



After the completion of the transcontinental railroad and the breakup of the great Spanish ranchos, the American immigrant became an increasingly familiar figure in Orange County. For a time the Santa Fe and Southern Pacific Railroads had a rate war in which a passenger could buy a Kansas City to Los Angeles ticket for exactly one dollar. This, among other reasons, encouraged a great influx of people and by 1886 California and Orange County were experiencing a flourishing land boom.



Southern Pacific had arrived in Orange County in 1875 and the Santa Fe in 1886. Trains pulled in daily with prospective buyers of real estate, who were met at the station by eager land promoters. Several cities planned during this period are remembered today only by old maps on the public record. A few, such as Buena Park and Fullerton, got off the drawing boards and developed into major metropolitan centers.

In 1886 Santa Ana incorporated as a city. Interest was rapidly mounting to create a county in the Santa Ana Valley, which had been part of Los Angeles County since 1850, the year California became a state. It was a four-hour trip by rail to the county seat, Los Angeles.

In 1889 the state legislature finally passed a bill creating Orange County, and on March 11 the governor signed it into law, effective officially August 1, 1889. Santa Ana became the county seat.



During the 1890's the county was developing a major citrus industry and other crops were successfully adopted by local farmers. Celery, sugar beets and lima beans were especially profitable. Southern California and Madagascar are the only places where lima beans are still grown.

Inter-urban transportation was the keynote for Southern California and Orange County in the early part of the 20th century. The Pacific Electric Railway and its big "red cars" were familiar sights passing through citrus groves and celery fields as tourists and residents enjoyed Sunday outings to an increasing number of resorts. The "red car" was so important to the economy of the county seat that Santa Ana celebrated with a "Parade of Products" when the first street car arrived in 1906. After 1920, the street car was gradually replaced by the horseless carriage, especially as paved roads increased in number. By 1946 virtually all of them were gone — superseded by freeways.



Garden Grove — 1930

In the early days, the Garden Grove community, which covers a vast area in the western part of the county, included both pastures for large herds of cattle and small family orchards. Mr. Stearns, mentioned earlier, purchased this area at a ridiculously low price. His desire was to set up the Stearns Empire. However, following the floods and drought of 1860-1870, he had to sell the rancho. He received \$1.50 per acre. Almost the entire settlement of Garden Grove was within the Rancho Las Bolsas, which included 33,000 acres stretching from the Santa Ana River on its eastern boundary to the Pacific Ocean on the south.

In the 1920's the South Coast Improvement Association had implemented a program to develop Newport Harbor. During prohibition, the harbor sometimes became a rendezvous for "rum runners" who unloaded their cargoes at various points along the coastline. Many cases of illicit liquor were confiscated and destroyed by law enforcement officers.

Ole Hanson promoted San Clemente in the mid-1920's and, while his Spanish architectural theme was put aside by the depression, the community continued to expand. It was one of the last towns in which lots were sold under an auction tent to the highest bidder.



Commonwealth Avenue, Fullerton – 1890's

In 1887, the city of Fullerton was established by the Amerige brothers. The name selected was in honor of George H. Fullerton, president of Pacific Land and Trust Company, a subsidiary of Sante Fe Railroad. When Mr. Fullerton was deposed as president of the company a short time later, the townsite name was changed to La Habra. The name La Habra was not popular and, although the first railroad tickets printed were for La Habra, the original name of Fullerton was retained. "La Habra" was applied later to a nearby community.

Fullerton was incorporated as a city on February 17, 1904. Its primary produce included Valencia oranges, walnuts, avocados and vegetables. Fullerton's growth was also spurred by the development of oil fields just to the north.

As the third decade of the 20th century arrived, Orange County was reeling from the depression. Adding to the troubles, the county experienced a severe earthquake on March 10, 1933, the same day President Franklin D. Roosevelt announced a ten-day bank holiday. Several communities suffered considerable damage.

Five years after the earthquake, the Santa Ana River went on its last great rampage down the Santa Ana Canyon to the sea. The delta from the Costa Mesa bluffs on the south to Coyote Creek in the north was a veritable lake for several days.

During World War II Orange County became a part of the nation's arsenal. Its shipyards built minesweepers and other naval vessels. Its farmland heard the familiar chant of army and marine sergeants' commands as processing centers and air bases suddenly appeared in various parts of the valley.

Many GI's liked what they saw while serving in the county and returned in later years to stay. By 1950 agriculture was rapidly giving way to housing subdivisions and shopping centers. As 1960 dawned, a network of freeways moving a multitude of traffic linked the county together.



Earthquake damage, Santa Ana – 1933



In May 1962, a former Garden Grove resident, Navy Lt. Comdr. Scott Carpenter, piloted the Mercury space capsule which orbited the earth. Many other Orange Countians have contributed to the success of the country's achievements in outer space through their work in electronic plants of the area.



The University of California's Irvine campus, located inland from Corona del Mar, accepted its first students in the fall of 1965. UCI, one of nine campuses within the University of California system, is committed to three goals: the pursuit of new knowledge through basic and applied research; the education of students from freshmen to post-doctoral fellows; and meaningful service to the communities the University serves. It is master planned as a general university with an ultimate enrollment of 27,500 students.

Tourism has become a major source of income for Orange County. Some of the nation's outstanding recreational attractions are situated within the county, including Anaheim Stadium, home of the California Angels and the Rams; Disneyland, which draws more than 10 million people annually; Knotts Berry Farm, covering 150 acres, attracts over 4.5 million visitors each year; Newport Harbor, starting place of the famous Newport to Ensenada Yacht Race; and Mission San Juan Capistrano, the county's first permanent settlement, dating back more than 200 years.

The county's 16-story courthouse, focal point of an impressive civic center, is situated in Santa Ana on Civic Center Drive, where the Finance Building, Health Center, County Jail, Library and State Building also are located.

As Orange County swings to industry and suburban centers, its noted citrus groves – like the Indians, the Spanish explorers and the rancheros, are part of history. The future promises to be as dynamic and colorful as the pioneer past for the "golden county."



PARTNERS IN PROGRESS . . .

When the county of Orange was carved out of Los Angeles County in 1889, two title companies served the area, Santa Ana Title Company and Orange County Abstract Company. Five years later, *C. E. Parker* effected the consolidation of the two firms as Orange County Title Company, predecessor of First American Title Insurance Company.

Evidence of their foresight is seen in the abstracting of a complete record of all Los Angeles County documents pertaining to the newly-formed Orange County. Six people worked six days a week for two years to transcribe by hand the land records – some dated back as far as 1834 and many translated from Spanish. First American is the only title firm in the county with these complete records.



Early leaders of First American helped shape the destiny of Orange County. The company's board of directors in 1904 included, left to right, standing: C. E. Parker, president; D. M. Dorman, Santa Ana businessman who with Moses Abbott built Newport Landing in 1872; Thomas L. McKeever, Santa Ana insurance executive; Frank Ey, member of a pioneer Anaheim family and one-time mayor of Santa Ana; and A. J. Visel, one of the first realtors and subdividers in the county; seated, George A. Edgar, whose "cracker barrel-pot bellied stove" grocery on Fourth Street in Santa Ana was the informal town meeting hall at the turn of the century; Charles A. Riggs, vice president; Frederick Stephens, secretary; Mrs. L. C. Greene, title searcher; and Adelaide Cochrane, typist.

In growing up with the county, First American and its staff members have played important parts in its development. While engaged in a nursery business, Mr. Parker provided the area with some of its first orange, walnut and other trees. He also furnished Santa Ana with its first electricity and telephones, purchased the second typewriter used in the county and pioneered the use of carbon paper.

Indicative of First American's continuing role in the county's progress, the Company issued the original abstract for the first courthouse site September 11, 1893, and in 1966 became the title insurer for the new courthouse building. At that time, the \$22.2 million policy was believed to be the largest title policy ever issued in Orange County.

First American has provided title protection for more Orange County property than any other firm, having insured such landmarks as Disneyland, Knott's Berry Farm, University of California – Irvine and numerous others.

Keeping pace with development throughout the United States, in 1957 First American began an expansion program which has extended its coverage to every state in the Union and in Guam, Mexico, Puerto Rico and the United Kingdom, a growth unparalleled in the title industry. The entire operation is headquartered in Santa Ana.

While rising to a position as one of the nation's top three title companies, First American has kept its roots in Orange County. As in years past, we are closely associated with the county's growth and development – and its people. We're still **FIRST IN ORANGE COUNTY!**

