

CALIFORNIA HISTORICAL LANDMARKS SERIES

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PLUMMER PARK

Registered Landmark #160

by

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for

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## PLUMMER PARK

Plummer Park, a piece of land on Santa Monica Boulevard in West Hollywood, is the site of the oldest house in the city. Giant pepper and elderberry trees make a typically Californian background for the old-fashioned ranch house. It stands as a reminder of the first California houses with which the Americans replaced the adobes built by the Spanish settlers of Los Angeles. Other houses of that period long since have been destroyed, and have given way to the large business blocks and fine residential districts for which Hollywood is famous. The Plummer house is the only one of its day remaining in a district of modern homes, many of them reproductions of early California and Spanish architecture. In its perfect setting, it is especially interesting as an original old California home, untouched by the trend and whimsy of modern times.

Originally, Plummer Park was a part of "La Brea" land grant. The major part of that grant was included in "Rancho La Brea," which was first granted by Governor Echeandia in 1828 to Antonio Rocha, a Portuguese blacksmith. Rocha and his heirs were provisional owners of

"La Brea." The land was sold several times until most of it passed into the hands of Major Henry Hancock. The ranch became famous for its brea and later for the pre-<sup>1</sup>historic fossils found there.

The part of "La Brea" grant which became Plummer Park was held by Señora Pérez as a squatter until 1873. In that year the United States government re-surveyed the land to separate the "La Brea" grant from the public domain. As a result of that survey, Señora Pérez lost her holdings. The Plummers acquired title to the land from her in 1874. The tract included 160 acres in the southeast quarter of section 9, township I. S.,<sup>2</sup> range 14, W. S. B. M.

Eugene B. Plummer built the six-room farmhouse and large barn on the property in 1874. The Plummers made the place their home for many years and became one of the well known old families of Los Angeles. The pepper and elderberry trees were planted soon after the house was built, between 1875 and 1881. As the town of Hollywood grew, the original tract of 160 acres was

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1. F. J. Seaman, "A brief history of rancho La Brea," in Historical Society of Southern California, Publications, IX, 255-256.
  2. H. H. P. Forbes, Plummer park and oldest house in Hollywood, 1.

sold off and dwindled to two and one-half acres.

The old place was used as a small recreational center known as Plummer Park. A few changes were made for better convenience, but the essential features of the house and grounds have not been altered. A large and very western looking dance pavilion, a barbecue pit and a deep well with excellent water have made the park a popular gathering place. Many fiestas for which California is so well known have been held there. The Vaquero Club also had its headquarters at Plummer Park for a number of years.

In Hollywood, one of the most ultra modern of cities, the Plummer house, standing among the magnificent old pepper and elderberry trees, brings back a refreshing bit of the early American period of California.

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