

# **Finding aid for the J. Paul Getty Collected Photographs and Postcards of Los Angeles and Vicinity, 1857-1940 IA40005**

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This finding aid was produced using ArchivesSpace on January 29, 2025.  
Description is in English.

## **Institutional Records and Archives**

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institutional\\_archives/](http://www.getty.edu/research/special_collections/institutional_archives/)

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## Summary Information

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- Repository:** Institutional Records and Archives
- Collector:** Getty, J. Paul (Jean Paul), 1892-1976
- Title:** Collected photographs and postcards of Los Angeles, California and vicinity
- ID:** IA40005
- Dates:** circa 1857-1940
- Extent:** 0.6 Linear Feet
- Request materials:** To access physical materials at the Getty, go to the [library catalog record](#) for this collection and click "Request an Item." Click here for [general library access policy](#). See the Administrative Information section of this finding aid for access restrictions specific to the records described below. Please note, some of the records may be stored off site; advanced notice is required for access to these materials.
- Language:** English .
- Abstract:** This collection primarily comprises black-and-white photographs of early California (1857-1940s). J. Paul Getty collected these images; they reflect his interest in Los Angeles and the coastal region of Santa Monica and Malibu, where he spent much of his life. The bulk of the images trace the development of Los Angeles from a small pueblo to a bustling city and show the Santa Monica coastline, canyons, and mountains prior to their development. The collection also contains several photographs of waterfront communities to the north and south of Los Angeles, a few shots of California missions, and one of the Redwoods. It also includes a small set of non-photographic postcards of California (1885).

### Preferred Citation

[Cite the item and series (as appropriate)], Collected photographs and postcards of Los Angeles and vicinity, J. Paul Getty. Institutional Archives, Research Library, Getty Research Institute, Finding aid no. IA40005.

<http://hdl.handle.net/10020/cifaia40005>

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## Biographical Note

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American oil tycoon and art collector Jean Paul Getty was born in Minneapolis, Minnesota on December 15, 1892 to George Franklin Getty (1855-1930) and Sarah Catherine McPherson Risher Getty. Around 1906 the Getty family moved to Los Angeles. Jean Paul, called "Paul," attended a private military school before going on to the University of Southern California in Los Angeles and the University of California, Berkeley. In 1911, Paul went to Oxford to study economics and political science, completing his diploma in 1913. Afterwards he embarked on a year-long Grand Tour of Europe, which no doubt sparked his interest in art and antiquities.

In 1914 Paul joined the family oil business and spent a year in the oil fields of Oklahoma. An astute investment in 160 acres near Stone Bluff, Oklahoma led to Paul's announcement two years later that he had earned his first million dollars. He returned to Los Angeles and took a break of more than a year before returning to the oil business. Paul then persuaded his father to shift the focus of the family business to the Los Angeles basin. Paul continued to work for the family company in addition to conducting oil drilling of his own, securing the family fortune by the time the stock market crashed in 1929. Upon his death in 1930 George left controlling interest in the company to Sarah. In 1934 Paul forced Sarah out of control of the company and gave her an annuity. His fortune grew as he acquired the controlling interest in several companies and became the head of a vast organization with activities in oil exploration, transportation, production and marketing, as well as minerals, manufacturing, real estate and agriculture. In the mid-1940s Getty bought the Saudi Arabian portion of the lease on the mineral rights in the Neutral Zone between Saudi Arabia and Kuwait; his wealth dramatically increased when this site produced oil in 1953.

Beginning in the early 1930s Getty lived in a house he built next to William Randolph Hearst's on the beach in Santa Monica. During World War II he moved to Tulsa, Oklahoma for four years to supervise wartime production of parts for Allied aircraft at his Spartan Aircraft plant. In 1946 he purchased 64 acres in Pacific Palisades, California and renovated the existing hacienda, known as the Ranch House, where he lived until 1951. When Getty departed the United States for Europe in 1951, he kept his Pacific Palisades estate for the display of his art collection and for the possibility of his eventual return. Getty had been collecting art since the 1930s and continued collecting throughout his lifetime. By 1968 his art collection had begun to outgrow the Ranch House and he began planning a new building on the property to properly house these works. He chose to pattern this new museum building after a first-century Roman country house, based primarily on the plans of the ancient Villa dei Papiri near Herculaneum. This museum, often called the Villa, opened to the public on January 16, 1974.

After leaving the United States Getty lived in hotel suites in Europe until 1960 when he moved to Sutton Place, a historic 72-room Tudor manor located 25 miles southwest of London. In 1957 *Fortune* magazine designated Getty as the world's wealthiest man, and he became the object of considerable public interest. For the rest of his life, both the respectable press and the tabloids reported on his perceived eccentricities and his private life, which included five marriages and divorces. J. Paul Getty died in England on June 6, 1976 without ever returning to California. Although he never saw the museum, he is buried at the Getty Villa property, on a bluff overlooking the Pacific Ocean. Much to everyone's surprise Getty left the bulk of his fortune to the museum with a mission to promote "the diffusion of artistic and general knowledge."

J. Paul Getty's publications include:

- Getty, J. Paul. *The history of the oil business of George F. and J. Paul Getty from 1903 to 1939*. Los Angeles (?), 1941.
- Getty, J. Paul. *Europe in the eighteenth century*. [Santa Monica, Calif.]: privately printed, 1949.
- Le Vane, Ethel, and J. Paul Getty. *Collector's choice: the chronicle of an artistic odyssey through Europe*. London: W.H. Allen, 1955.
- Getty, J. Paul. *My life and fortunes*. New York: Duell, Sloan & Pearce, 1963.
- Getty, J. Paul. *The joys of collecting*. New York: Hawthorn Books, 1965.
- Getty, J. Paul. *How to be rich*. Chicago: Playboy Press, 1965.
- Getty, J. Paul. *The golden age*. New York: Trident Press, 1968.
- Getty, J. Paul. *How to be a successful executive*. Chicago: Playboy Press, 1971.
- Getty, J. Paul. *As I see it: the autobiography of J. Paul Getty*. Englewood Cliffs, N.J. : Prentice-Hall, 1976.

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## Scope and Contents Note

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This collection primarily comprises black-and-white photographs of early California (1857-1940s). J. Paul Getty collected these images; they reflect his interest in Los Angeles and the coastal region of Santa Monica, Malibu, and the Pacific Palisades, where he spent much of his life. The bulk of the images trace the development of Los Angeles from a small pueblo to a bustling city and show the Santa Monica area coastline, canyons, and mountains prior to their development. The collection also contains several photographs of waterfront communities and resorts to the north and south of Los Angeles, a few shots of California missions, and one of the Redwoods. It also includes a small set of non-photographic postcards of California (1885). Among this collection are also a few photographs of New York City, a photograph of an unidentified weightlifting competition, and a color photogravure of Château de Pierrefonds (France).

Many of the photographs in this collection were originally collected by Charles C. Pierce (1861-1946), a notable photographer of early California, who sold photographs out of his store on Spring Street in Los Angeles. Although many of these images are stamped on the verso with the name C. C. Pierce, they were not necessarily created by Pierce. Pierce assembled an impressive library of historic California photographs (and negatives), removed the original photographers' signatures from the works, and stamped his own name on the images. Several other photographs in this collection are attributed to Adelbert Bartlett (1887-1966), a photographer based in Santa Monica, who was known locally and abroad for his images of Southern California.

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## Arrangement

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This collection is arranged in two series: Series I. Photographic prints; Series II. Postcards.

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## Administrative Information

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### Restrictions on Access

These records are available for use by qualified researchers.

The J. Paul Getty Trust reserves the right to restrict access to any records held by the Institutional Archives.

### Publication Rights

Many of the photographs in this collection bear copyright and other stamps reflecting ownership on the verso. Contact [Rights and Reproductions](#) at the Getty Research Institute for copyright information and permission to publish. Permission for publication is given on behalf of the Getty as the owner of the physical items and is not intended to include or imply permission of the copyright holder, which must also be obtained.

### Immediate Source of Acquisition

These materials were entered into the archives as accession number 1986.IA.29.

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## Related Materials

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### Related Archival Materials Note

*The following materials are offered as possible sources of further information on the agencies and subjects covered by these records. The listing is not exhaustive.*

**The Huntington Library**

The [C. C. Pierce Collection of photographs](#), circa 1840-1930. Located in: The Huntington Library, San Marino, California. Identification number: photCL Pierce.

### **Charles E. Young Research Library, University of California, Los Angeles**

The [Adelbert Bartlett Papers](#), [1900s]. Located in: Department of Special Collections, Charles E. Young Research Library, University of California, Los Angeles. Collection 1300.

### **USC Libraries Special Collections, Doheny Memorial Library**

The [Title Insurance Trust / C. C. Pierce Collection](#), 1860-1960. Located in: USC Libraries Special Collections, Doheny Memorial Library, Los Angeles, California. Record ID: chs-m265.

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## **Controlled Access Headings**

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### **Contributor(s)**

- Bartlett, Adelbert
- Pierce, C. C. (Charles C.), 1861-1946

### **Subjects - Topics**

- Beaches -- California -- 19th century
- Beaches -- California -- 20th century
- Piers -- California -- 19th century
- Piers -- California -- 20th century
- Waterfronts -- California -- 19th century
- Waterfronts -- California -- 20th century

### **Subjects - Places**

- Los Angeles (Calif.) -- Buildings, structures, etc. -- 19th century
- Los Angeles (Calif.) -- Buildings, structures, etc. -- 20th century
- Los Angeles (Calif.) -- History -- 20th century -- Pictorial works
- Los Angeles (Calif.) -- Pictorial works -- 19th century
- Malibu (Calif.) -- Pictorial works -- 19th century
- Malibu (Calif.) -- Pictorial works -- 20th century
- Ocean Park (Calif.) -- Pictorial works -- 19th century
- Ocean Park (Calif.) -- Pictorial works -- 20th century
- Pacific Palisades (Los Angeles, Calif.) -- Pictorial works -- 20th century
- Santa Monica (Calif.) -- Pictorial works -- 19th century
- Santa Monica (Calif.) -- Pictorial works -- 20th century
- Santa Monica Mountains (Calif.) -- Pictorial works -- 19th century
- Santa Monica Mountains (Calif.) -- Pictorial works -- 20th century

- Topanga Canyon (Calif.) -- Pictorial works -- 20th century
- Venice (Los Angeles, Calif.) -- 20th century -- Pictorial works

## Genres and Forms of Materials

- Photographic prints -- California -- 19th century
- Photographic prints -- California -- 20th century
- Photogravures -- France -- Color
- Postcards -- California -- 19th century

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## Collection Inventory

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### Series I. Photographic prints

*Scope and Contents:*

This series comprises black-and-white photographs of early California (1857-1940s). J. Paul Getty collected these images; they reflect his interest in Los Angeles and the coastal region of Santa Monica and Malibu. The bulk of the images trace the development of Los Angeles from a small pueblo to a bustling city and show the Santa Monica coastline, canyons, and mountains prior to their development. The collection also contains several photographs of waterfront communities and resorts to the north and south of Los Angeles, a few shots of California missions, and one of the Redwoods. Within this series are also a few photographs of New York City and a photograph of an unidentified weightlifting competition.

Many of the photographs in this collection were originally collected by Charles C. Pierce (1861-1946). Several photographs in this collection are attributed to Adelbert Bartlett (1887-1966).

This series contains approximately 186 black-and-white photographic prints (plus four duplicates) ranging from 5 x 7 to 8 x 10 inches in size.

Please Note: Photographic negatives have been created from some of the prints. The negatives are housed in box 1986.AI.29-3.

*Arrangement:*

The photographs in this series are arranged in binders by geographic region, divided by tabs. They are arranged chronologically within each geographic region. Their original order has been retained.

Title/Description	Containers
Long Beach "Bathing beauties," 1900 (1 photograph, 8 x 10 inches)	Box 1986.IA.29-01
Los Angeles, 1857-1930 (83 photographs, 8 x 10 inches and 2 photographs, 6 x 8 inches)	Box 1986.IA.29-02
<p><i>Scope and Contents:</i></p> <p>These photographs depict street scenes from locations in the heart of Los Angeles. Most of them bear captions written by J. Paul Getty describing cross streets and vantage points. Some of the buildings and events noted are Central High School (labeled as Los Angeles High School), the residence of Able Stearns, a Main Street parade, Pico House, Fort Moore Hill, San Pedro, Washington Gardens, Opening day of cable car service (June 8, 1889), Hamburger's (People's) Store, Hotel Westminster, Mason Opera House, Hotel Angeles, Blanchard Hall, Pacific Electric building, Call Building (burning on April 18, 1906), Los Angeles Furniture Company, Hotel Alexandria, Hotel Lankershim, and Los Angeles Plaza. The oldest images are two photographs of what appear to be sketches of Los Angeles (1857 and 1864).</p>	

Missions San Luis Rey, Santa Inéz, and San Antonio de Pádua, undated (3 photographs, 5 x 7 inches)	Box 1986.IA.29-02
New York City: 5th Avenue, Delmonico's, and the Vanderbilt residence, circa 1876-1920 (3 photographs, 8 x 10 inches)	Box 1986.IA.29-02
Ocean Park: pier, beach, bath house, and La Monica Ballroom, 1890-1926 (7 photographs ranging from 5 x 7 to 8 x 10 inches)	Box 1986.IA.29-01
Playa del Rey, 1908 (1 photograph, 8 x 10 inches)	Box 1986.IA.29-01
Redwoods of Cathedral Grove, circa 1900s (1 photograph, 8 x 10 inches)	Box 1986.IA.29-02
Santa Monica and neighboring areas, 1875-1940 and undated (67 photographs, ranging from 5 x 7 to 8 x 10 inches)	Box 1986.IA.29-01
<p><i>Scope and Contents:</i>                      These photographs focus on the coastlines, canyons, landscapes, and cityscapes of Santa Monica, Malibu, and Pacific Palisades. Hand-written captions include references to the Santa Monica Hotel, Hotel Arcadia, Las Flores Inn, Santa Monica Beach Club, the Lighthouse Café, bath houses, Santa Monica Pier, Southern Pacific Long Wharf, Santa Monica Bank, Ocean View Avenue, the stage road, fishermen's villages, road racers, Miramar Hotel, Miramar Estates opening, Castellemare, Castle Rock, and Arch Rock. They also include one photograph of what appears to be a photogravure depicting Santa Monica Pier and surrounding area in 1880; one photograph of a collage of the Southern Pacific Long Wharf; and one photograph of a sketch of Santa Monica Hotel.</p> <p>Significant to Getty history are 1927 and 1929 photographs of Claude Parker's Ranch and the surrounding hills, the current site of the Getty Ranch House and Villa Museum in Malibu.</p>	
Topanga Canyon and the Outside Inn, circa 1918 (10 photographs, 5 x 7 inches)	Box 1986.IA.29-01
Venice: pier, swimmers, and aerial view of city, 1905-1918 (7 photographs, ranging from 6 x 8 to 8 x 10 inches)	Box 1986.IA.29-01
Weightlifting competition, circa 1920s (1 photograph, 8 x 10 inches)	Box 1986.IA.29-02

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## Series II. Postcards

*Scope and Contents:*

This series primarily consists of a set of 17 non-photographic postcards measuring 3 x 4.5 inches, printed in sepia on vanilla cardstock, collected by J. Paul Getty in a scrapbook entitled "Los Angeles and Vicinity." The postcards were published in 1885 by Wittemann Bros. of New York. The postcards portray typical images of early California, including Los Angeles area streets, beaches, harbors, native vegetation, a vineyard, and a few missions. The first card is twice the size of the others and depicts a broad view of the city of Los Angeles, including Central High School and the Court House. Also included in this series is the embossed cover of the original scrapbook in which the set of California postcards were collected and one unrelated color photogravure of the Château de Pierrefonds, France.

*Arrangement:*

The original order of the postcards has been retained.

Title/Description	Containers	
Scrapbook cover: "Los Angeles and Vicinity," undated	Box Shared 1986.IA.29-03 and 2018.IA.26	Folder 1
California postcards, 1885 (16 postcards, 3 x 4.5 inches and 1 postcard, 3 x 9 inches)	Box Shared 1986.IA.29-03 and 2018.IA.26	Folder 2
Château de Pierrefonds postcard, undated (1 color photogravure, 10.5 x 5.25 inches)	Box Shared 1986.IA.29-03 and 2018.IA.26	Folder 3

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